AMERICAN PUBLISHERS OF INDECENT BOOKS, 1840-1890

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To Ruth, Who Waited

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I learned the place of blind luck in shaping one's academic possibilities at a conference in Charlottesville, Virginia. I had just begun graduate school, and the world of academia was an exhilarating change from my previous job in printing production. Studying the history of technology allowed me to stay within a field that I loved, but at enough of a remove to avoid the uncertainty of being in an industry in which new technologies and competitors seemed to appear each day.

At that conference of the Society for the History of Technology, I had the good fortune to talk with Bill Pretzer, who urged me to visit the University of Virginia campus to meet up with a group of printing historians. In the basement of the library, I found myself in a room packed with books, printing equipment, refreshments, and members of the American Printing History Association meeting at Rare Book School, formerly known as the Book Arts Press. In that crowded room, I soon conversed with Terry Belanger and learned from others that I should become acquainted with Michael Winship. The unfortunate maxim that "Those who can, do, and those who can't, teach" is as wrong-headed as the sophisticated isolation of many academics from the insights of the world of work. Through these two scholars and many others, I found the field of book history to be a home where my identity as an academic and as a craftsperson could be joined, and I am grateful to take a place behind them in the discipline.

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I am suspicious of solitary intellectual work. No researcher truly works in isolation. Good scholarship is shaped by communities that inform, challenge, and support a researcher, and I have been fortunate during my dissertation work to have been aided by many in my journey across disciplines. I have relied for advice, knowledge, and generosity from colleagues in American studies, English, history, and sociology; catalogers, conservators, museum curators, and special collections staff; and printers, book shop owners, and rare book collectors. A complete listing would stretch the length of the dissertation even further, and I hope that each of those who so kindly gave of their time and experience can know some measure of my appreciation.

Printing museum and special collections staff members throughout North America made this dissertation possible by going beyond their daily work in making me familiar with their collections, tracking down answers to my research requests, and helping me to make the most of sometimes brief windows of opportunity for visiting a city. Others showed great patience over the lengthy course of my research as I came back again and again with additional call slips or questions by e-mail. I would like to thank staff members at numerous institutions, as well as trustees and supporters, for collecting, maintaining, and ensuring maximum access to reference materials and rare books critical to the completion of this dissertation.

Claire Sheridan of the Osborne Library at the American Textile History Museum kindly arranged a guided tour of her museum, and Rev. Donat R. Lamothe, d'Alzon Library at Assumption College, made sure that when I *did* walk through that blizzard in Worcester to see a single book, the doors were open and that book was available. William H. Loos (retired), of the Grosvenor Room at the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library patiently read materials to me by phone to verify the uniqueness of that institution's holdings. Jane Siegel of the Graphic Arts Collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University provided encouragement to me during my first classes at Rare Book School, long before she had the opportunity to welcome me to the collection under her care. Christine Riggle and Laura Linard of the Historical Collections of the Baker Library at Harvard University, as well as staff of the Widener and Houghton libraries, and Liana Zhou of the Library and Special Collections at the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction helped me make the most of the few days rather than the many weeks that should have been spent at their institutions.

Staff members of the Rare Books Department at the Boston Public Library; the Special Collections and Preservation Division at the Chicago Public Library; the Special Collections at the Cleveland Public Library; and the Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library and the Pitts Theology Library at Emory University assisted me in viewing their holdings. I also thank those who helped me during my visits to the New York Public Library; Department of Special Collections at the University of California–Los Angeles; the University of Georgia libraries; Rare Book Collection of the Special Collections and Archives at Georgia State University; the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; and the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

For special attention to my interest in the physical properties of books, I am grateful for advice given by Alan Jutzi, Avery Chief Curator in the Rare Books Department at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens; Cindy Bowden of the Robert C. Williams Paper Museum at the Institute of Paper Science and Technology; and Gayle Cooper of the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at University of Virginia. Aloha South of the National Archives and Records Administration is herself a national treasure, and the depth of knowledge she shares with researchers has made possible more dissertations than mine.

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The Library of Congress is a beautifully grand but sometimes intimidating institution. I developed a love for the nation's library and made contacts that enriched me professionally and personally through my friendship with Cynthia J. Johanson. Cinder

loved the library, the people who worked there, and those whom they served. Her death has left an empty space at the institution that will not be filled. The Rare Book and Special Collections Reading Room staff, including Mark Dimunation, Rosemary Fry Plakas, Clark Evans, and Gerry Wager, who sadly also has passed away, gave generously of their time to my project. John Y. Cole of The Center for the Book helped me to learn more about the library, as did manuscript staff overseeing the administrative archives.

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Stan Nelson, retired from the Division of Graphic Arts at the Smithsonian Institution, is arguably the greatest living expert at demonstrating the range of American printing skills from colonial times through the nineteenth century. It has been my honor to work alongside Stan, Richard-Gabriel Rummonds, Barbara Henry, and others. Mark Barbour of the International Printing Museum and Gardner J. LePoer of the Museum of Printing provided behind-the-scene tours of their impressive holdings as I learned more about printing techniques. John Buchtel and Terry Belanger of Rare Book School helped me to hone my skills further.

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My partner, Ruth Einstein, lays claim to the most acknowledgment, however. Our life together has seen the arrivals and departures of friends and family, and she has offered balance – and proofreading – when it was most needed. I regret that both of our fathers and Jimmy Park, my brother-in-law, did not live long enough to celebrate this achievement. My father enjoyed history, and my mother encouraged my love of books. Having seen her earn a doctorate while she raised five children and worked, I gained inspiration for pursuing my own degree, even while life went on around me. I thank

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

Journal abbreviations used in this dissertation are:

PBSA	*Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*
SB	*Studies in Bibliography*

Location abbreviations are:

AAS	American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.
BPL	Boston Public Library, Boston, Mass.
IPST	Institute of Paper Science and Technology
LOC	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
UVA	University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

SUMMARY

American publishers of indecent books from 1840 to 1890 were not outsiders to the printing trades. They should be seen instead as entrepreneurs whose technological practices and business strategies were largely representative of the diversity within American publishing. Books prohibited or later destroyed because of their content survived in a relatively wide variety of forms in the hands of rare book collectors, making such artifacts perhaps even more important for the study of industrial practices than literary works collected in greater numbers by research institutions. Those rare artifacts make available long-lost details about the men and women who manufactured print at the boundaries of social propriety, the production technologies they employed, and the place of difficult-to-research publishers in the American book trades. Conservation, papermaking, illustrations, printing, and typefounding are as important to the history of American erotica as the more famous prosecutions led by Anthony Comstock.

Focusing on works considered indecent by the nineteenth-century bibliographer Henry Spencer Ashbee, this dissertation integrates the political economy of print with an analysis of the material forms of semi-erotic and obscene books. Surviving artifacts offer evidence about regional production styles and the ways that fiber selection, and particularly the use of straw in low-quality papers, influenced the prevalence of yellow wrappers for ephemeral works. Printer skill levels and capitalization can sometimes be determined through the presence of gripper marks on printed sheets. Reconstructing and contextualizing the technological practices of these publishers can create new tools for

bibliographical analysis, an accessible source of information about technical processes for general historians, and a wealth of data about publishers such as William Berry, whose role in networks of erotica in nineteenth-century America has only recently begun to be appreciated.

Chapter One

Introduction

Books make ideas material, and historians should read print for evidence about the sociology of material processes as well as for intellectual content. More particularly, indecent books studied as objects can make available long-lost details about the men and women who manufactured print at the boundaries of social propriety, the networks and technologies they employed, and the place of difficult-to-research publishers in the American book trades. Key elements of their technical and business approaches mirrored those of more prominent publishers, and studying the objects left behind by erotica publishers highlights gaps in the history of American papermaking and other printing trades. Reconstructing and contextualizing the technological practices of these actors can create new tools for bibliographical analysis, sources of information about technical processes for general historians, and a wealth of data about specific publishers whose importance has taken more than a century to be acknowledged.

Materiality plays a major but understudied role in public discourse about the role of print in society. Scholars in the history of the book have begun to expand our knowledge about the diverse publishing practices during the nineteenth century in the United States and to pay attention to the importance of material practices. Cultural historians likewise have begun marking out intellectual and social lines of inquiry for understanding evolving notions about sexuality and gender. The production systems

[*] An earlier version of this essay was presented as a paper titled " 'Bad man, bad business, bad habits, bad character': Or, America's Homegrown Publishers of 'Indecent Books,' 1840-1890" at the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing Annual Conference, Williamsburg, Va., July 21, 2001.

through which books came into the hands of readers shaped the context in which ideas were spread, absorbed, and reinterpreted.

Exploring the relationship of physical form to content requires first gathering information about the choices that producers and publishers made in order to bring a publication to the marketplace. This task is made more difficult in the field of erotica, which typically lacks a foundation of the ledger books, publisher correspondence, or other documents that have proven helpful in studying major publishing houses. As research about the cultural meanings of print widens to include the role of less documented publishing firms, recovering evidence from artifacts can make research about the emergence of a public, market-based erotic culture in America during the nineteenth century more robust, while supporting the important work of preserving the actual books so crucial to scholars.

This dissertation contributes to a dynamic cluster of interdisciplinary research about nineteenth-century American erotic culture focusing primarily upon antebellum publishing in New York City and building upon the earlier work of David S. Reynolds and Timothy J. Gilfoyle. Current works by Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Donna I. Dennis, and Paul J. Erickson consider the cultural negotiations over competing ideologies about sexuality, the political economy and legal practices affecting purveyors of erotic commodities in New York, and the role of city-mystery fiction as a vehicle for expressing social tensions that arose as part of rapid urbanization during the nineteenth century. The dissertation at hand overlaps with these treatments of American erotic culture, taking as its main task the explication of how technical practices comprised a critical factor in making possible the explosion of erotic print, and, indeed, print culture, during that

century. Publisher strategies balanced available resources in ways that reflected anticipated markets, and those choices comprised interpretive actions that shaped how readers acquired such books and under what circumstances experiences with print occurred. As scholars begin to study the diffusion and consumption of erotic print in smaller communities and as a regional phenomenon rather than a national industry dominated by New York City, exploring the physical forms and marketing patterns of illicit print will become even more important to historians of culture.[1]

The apparent silence within the historical record about how publishers of indecent books did business in nineteenth-century America is formidable. At the same time, investigating their technical and entrepreneurial practices is critical to understanding larger publishing and consumption patterns of that era. The multiplication of technical practices during the nineteenth century and scarcity of surviving examples of indecent books heighten the difficulty of gaining clues about how such print became a persistent strand of American literature. The ability of future historians to analyze reader experiences ultimately rests upon the commitment of today's scholars to the preservation and analysis of the physical forms of print. We have little else with which to understand how any but the most literate of Americans made erotic print a part of their lives.

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[1] David S. Reynolds, *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville* (New York: Knopf, 1988); Timothy J. Gilfoyle, *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Knopf, 2002); Donna I. Dennis, "New York City, Obscenity Regulation, and the Creation of American Erotica, 1820-1880" (Princeton University, Ph.D. Dissertation, History, 2005); and Paul J. Erickson, "Welcome to Sodom: The Cultural Work of City-Mysteries Fiction in Antebellum America" (University of Texas, Ph.D. Dissertation, American Studies, 2005). See also George Thompson, *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, eds. David S. Reynolds and Kimberly R. Gladman (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Kimberly R. Gladman, "Upper Tens and Lower Millions: City Mysteries Fiction and Class in the Mid-Nineteenth Century" (Rutgers University, Ph.D. Dissertation, Comparative Literature, 2001).; and Jay Gertzman's *Bookleggers and Smuthounds: The Trade in Erotica, 1920-1940* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), which studies early twentieth-century pornography publishers as pariah capitalists.

From color posters advertising theatrical events and handbills thrust into the hands of passersby to books hawked at newsstands and hand-colored Audubon illustrations, print became ubiquitous in the nineteenth century. The production processes that contributed so deeply to the upsurge of print have been explored with great depth in certain areas but with less breadth than the field deserves. Printing historians have celebrated the technical advancements that symbolized American production superiority at the end of the nineteenth century while failing to contextualize the success of volume production processes as part of an innovative environment that fostered flexible technologies and alternative techniques. The tremendous production capability of the intricate and massive Fourdrinier machine explains the technological ascendance of American papermaking in the nineteenth century only when studied as part of the interplay of competing technologies and the long search for alternative fiber sources.

Likewise, the finely calibrated cylinder printing machines of the penny press and omnipresent newspapers after the Civil War have received the lion's share of attention from printing historians. A mechanized hand press more amenable to printing with stereotyped plates rather than the cylinder press allowed book and certain newspaper publishers to meet consumer demand for print during the middle of the century, however. Remarkably, no historian has undertaken to write a monograph about the Adams power press, which from its own time to the present has been credited as being the chief machine dominating the nation's book manufacturing capability during the critical mid-nineteenth century expansion of print production. The enthusiasm for studying large-scale technologies has resulted too often in a lack of attention to incremental improvements.

The dilemma in studying many of the publications purchased, borrowed, noted, and read as Americans grappled with the meanings of sexuality and self is that they no longer exist. Whether destroyed by prosecutors or heirs uncomfortable with the content of such works, produced of low-quality materials that deteriorated, or read and thrown away as ephemeral publications, far fewer indecent books have survived than were consumed during the nineteenth century. Those that have persisted have done so largely because prosecutions contrived to eradicate semi-erotic and obscene print from public circulation made such works attractive to a growing class of private collectors. In an ironic twist of intention, the scarcity of books considered indecent encouraged the collection of those items in a wide range of conditions and physical forms, providing in one genre a remarkably broad picture of nineteenth-century American book printing and publishing. I have found that documenting the materiality of such publications, and especially those for which no publisher records are available, is a task that bibliographers of clandestine literature have frequently addressed.

A graduate seminar discussion about the role of Anthony Comstock in arresting members of printing trade networks involved in erotica production led to this dissertation. Having experience in commercial printing myself, I wanted to know what kinds of printing and which sectors of the industry were most frequently prosecuted. Over the course of my research, it became evident that national industrial policies had opened the way for American publishers and readers to challenge and revise boundaries between public and private behavior through commerce in illicit publications. Statutes banning obscenity served to help legitimate the market economy, attempting to smooth over conflicts between commercial opportunities and social values that became apparent in the

sale and consumption of indecent books. The materials, techniques, and distribution of erotic print can be linked indirectly to the expansion of government power into the lives of Americans well before the so-called Comstock Act of 1873.

In order to better understand the cumulative effect of technological change in the growth of a domestic market for sensational fiction, erotica, and obscene books, the work at hand focuses primarily on the period prior to the major prosecutions undertaken by Anthony Comstock. Government policies supported the rise of print culture through copyright laws, patent laws, postal delivery and rates, and tariffs, and publishers of erotica benefited along with others. Moral reform served to legitimate the growing role of the national government in the lives of citizens. At the same time, moral reform distanced the use of government power from the shadows cast by a maturing market economy. Laws intended to encourage domestic manufacturing and to protect Americans from foreign social threats instead promoted a native erotica industry, calling into question the faith of citizens in good government.

The spread of illicit literature during the antebellum years set in motion perceptions of a growing menace that infused moral reformers and government officials with a sense of urgency. At the national level, moral reform emerged only in the wake of the Civil War, as Americans sought to find ways to reconstruct a sense of communal identity and shared sense of purpose. During the quarter century after that mortal conflict, intense competition among publishers and an uncertain economy made providers of illicit literature especially vulnerable to isolation and prosecution. The chief attempts to constrict the distribution of obscene print took place, importantly, during periods in which erotica publishers were weakest economically and socially.

In 1842, Congress passed the first federal law concerning obscenity, banning offensive pictorials from being imported into the country. That law was strengthened in 1857. The attempt to prohibit obscenity from American shores opened the way for domestic producers to ply the trade. Publishers of indecent books took advantage of intensifying consumer demand for diverse print, government policies that favored American print-related trades and internal commerce, and a dizzying array of technical advances that transformed the nation's printing industry into a global leader in the decades following the Civil War.

The flood of cheap and tawdry books, easily detected by the yellow wrappers that frequently enfolded their contents, concerned military authorities in Union camps during the Civil War. The volume of sensational fiction and explicitly sexual material sent by mail to soldiers especially concerned authorities; allowing books to be carried in the mail potentially involved the U.S. government in the distribution of obscenity. While the prosecution of publishers under local and state common law before the war had focused on the public nuisance posed by the sale of such literature, the development of federal laws elevated the charge into a criminal offense against a national community.

During the 1860s, fewer publishers took out copyrights on the American-written titles or translations of foreign erotica, and by the latter half of that decade, it had become clear that no work considered obscene would be protected under copyright laws. In 1865, the Post Office Department forbade obscene material from being conveyed by mail. That first postal obscenity law attempted to protect the manhood of Union soldiers from being defiled by morally corrupt literature while insulating the national government from complicity in distributing obscenity. Before 1870, the legal system began barring

publishers from recourse to government mechanisms for securing intellectual rights to their works.

Best known of these developments, however, is the 1873 Comstock Act, which strengthened previous restrictions and further excluded information about contraceptives, abortion, or devices for immoral purposes from the mail. Anthony Comstock kept detailed records of all persons he aided in prosecuting under state and federal obscenity laws from 1872 onward. He made several well-publicized swipes at well known malefactors in the early 1870s, resulting in the destruction of large quantities of stock and production equipment, according to his self-interested reporting of his actions.

Each proscription made a statement that offenders were outside of the national community's values. But were publishers of indecent books in the nineteenth century strangers to the nation? According to the evidence uncovered, they were not. Many of those publishers can be associated with second-tier literature or piratical practices. Others dealt in niche literature with production quality equal to that of upper-level literary publishers. With this range of technical expertise and marketing approaches, their books are more representative of the sweep of domestic trade practices during the nineteenth century than many collections that focus on examples of printing excellence or the nation's literary canon.

This dissertation began as an inquiry into the relationship of technological practices and the prosecution of distributors of erotica who used the federal postal system. At the start of my research, I spent several months going through the special investigation case files of the Post Office Department and reading arrest records kept by agents of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. At the National Archives, I

found strikingly little evidence about the actual books that postal investigators had considered to be obscene. Crumbling envelopes and long-folded indictments offered few titles or concrete details about the works whose distribution had been the cause for the arrest and incarceration of Americans. Having been moved multiple times and repackaged for permanent storage, the files had been culled of virtually all court evidence. Additionally, a small number of book publishers had been prosecuted compared to those whose writing on postcards, attempts to blackmail or defame others, or distribution of newspapers or ephemera had warranted scrutiny.

The arrest records of Anthony Comstock provided more information. In scrawled handwriting, he noted his role as a postal investigator and member of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice in ridding New York and other cities of morally damaging reading material. His colorful and sometimes vitriolic comments about suspected purveyors of illicit materials revealed anxiety about the importance of documenting his work. Intense moral danger required vigorous and aggressive action, he asserted, and Comstock's own notes supported his sometimes unpopular prosecutions.

Despite my efforts, I found that his early hounding of major erotica publishers had occurred under the aegis of state law, with the key entrepreneurs – William Haynes, George Ackerman, and Jeremiah H. Farrell – typically fleeing arrest. Intimidating and prosecuting members of their publishing networks and smaller distributors had constituted the majority of Comstock's successes in stemming the tide of indecent material. Nevertheless, the trials of Victoria C. Woodhull, E.B. Foote, and D.M. Bennett under federal law, along with the constitutional ramifications of obscenity prosecutions, have monopolized the attention of historians until fairly recently. Newer legal history has

investigated economic relationships, police powers, and the regulatory aspects of law, and through that perspective it is evident that Comstock's activities against the book trades focused on the production networks surrounding publishers and on a relatively small number of titles. Furthermore, after the mid-1870s, he turned his attention as a federal agent to the economic vices of fraud and gambling that crossed state lines rather than the moral threat of illicit literature.

In seeking out information from publishers themselves about their business practices, I could not find in prosecution records the information that I sought. Judges and bureaucrats often refused to allow obscenity, which might be as minor as a book's title, to be read into legal records. Moral reformers knew all too well what publishers today know: any publicity is good publicity. They kept tight lips about the books they sought to destroy. I also never found the holy grail of American obscenity prosecutions, which was Anthony Comstock's famous locker of confiscated evidence. Among the documents that he prepared for the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice was a tantalizing roster of coded storage locations for materials that he purportedly had paraded before members of Congress as part of lobbying for stricter anti-obscenity laws. Writing a cohesive narrative with so much of the historical record unrecorded or destroyed seemed an impossible task.

Another unspoken bias arose. Primarily relying upon evidence supplied by those embedded within, and whose positions were reliant upon, a power structure invested in discrediting certain forms of print presented its own perspective. Studying publishers from the point of view of those who enforced statutes and at the same time benefited from campaigns to clean up the publishing trade assumed a cohesive definition of

obscenity. It also legitimated the isolation of those who were prosecuted, seeming to substantiate their marginality. In fact, prosecution was the end result of a funneling process drawing only certain works and publishers into a punitive mechanism. The most important events in shaping the technological context of the marketplace for indecent books occurred before the Comstock Law of 1873, with prosecutions a reaction to the entrepreneurial ingenuity of American publishers.

Turning to another source for identifying illicit literature became imperative. Erotica bibliographies offered an alternative way of limiting the number of titles while reflecting contemporary perspectives about socially appropriate literature. The work of the noted nineteenth-century bibliographer Henry Spencer Ashbee, who wrote under the name Pisanus Fraxi, stood out. As a noted nineteenth-century English bibliographer and expert on Western erotica available through the mid-1880s, Ashee became a chief source for identifying potentially obscene works through the eyes of a reader-specialist rather than prosecutors. His perspective as a collector and consumer made him aware of, but not bound by, the legal standards of England and the United States. Using three works he published between 1877 and 1885, and supplementing them carefully with other sources, I developed a list of about 185 titles.

After checking for false imprints, duplications, or other questions of veracity, about 130 works could be verified as having been produced in whole or in part in the United States through 1890. From authorship and printing to title page cancellation and binding, manufacture rather than the intellectual origin of the text made each item American. I also chose to use the word indecent rather than obscene when describing these books. Although virtually a synonym of obscenity in legal parlance of the

nineteenth century, indecency expresses a concern with identifying appropriate connections between private and public behavior. The word indecent seems a better descriptor for works that were not necessarily prosecuted but that certainly were subject to social disapproval. While obscenity only refers to legally proscribed activity, indecency moves this dissertation away from a more limited study of the formal use of state power and toward the broader field of print that transgressed social norms while remaining commercially popular.

Armed with my list, I began research at the Library of Congress. I hoped to find many of the titles I sought, perhaps hidden in the remnants of the famed Delta Collection which I knew had been disbanded years ago. I expected a long search. I wanted to answer a question: what was the relationship of federal policies to the technological practices of American publishers of indecent books during the nineteenth century? And more concretely, had federal laws about obscenity in any way formed a *de facto* technology policy? This line of inquiry required intensive research with actual books. I knew that the details I could learn from descriptive bibliography would help me at least partially to uncover the technological practices of those publishers.

After extensive research and help from library staff, I realized that to answer my first question, I would have to answer another: How does a library justify keeping controversial material? Unfortunately, the role of the Library of Congress as a public institution makes it subject to political pressures that demand the disposal rather than collection of controversial literature. The Library has had to balance its main directive to serve as a research source for members of Congress with rising citizen expectations that the institution would provide a publicly-accessible and permanent record of American

civilization. Books produced outside of the United States and printed in foreign languages might pass public scrutiny as classic literature or potential sources of information about other cultures when those printed in more accessible English did not. By and large, American collecting institutions did not acquire an appreciable range of semi-erotic or obscene books representing domestic publishers until very late in the nineteenth century or during periods of social ferment in the twentieth century. It is no accident, then, that private institutions and collectors are the best source for finding original copies of works cited by Ashbee.

The dilemma of how to justify collecting marginal or obscene literature with a vision of the needs of future generations of scholars is not unique to America's greatest public library. Of approximately 130 titles listed by Ashbee with about 30 others closely related through publisher marketing strategies that I ultimately determined should be counted toward a bibliography of indecent American books through 1890, only about one-third still exist as physical copies in the United States. They are scattered in rare book collections across the country. These contemporaneous, intact examples are vital to connecting production styles to marginalized literature. Vastly less helpful are reprints such as microfilm and new editions. Ironically, Victorian erotica has experienced a surge in popularity recently, resulting in paperback editions that make available texts of some of the more explicit nineteenth-century works. The most graphic titles are exceedingly difficult to find in their original form; many appear to exist, if at all, in the hands of private collectors.

Around 1890, the maze of tariffs, postal regulations, and copyright laws that had in many ways protected publishers reached closure on how to deal with domestic

producers of indecent books. A handful of publishers noted by Ashbee also appeared in arrest records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice from 1872 to 1890, but most major vendors were forced out of business relatively early in Comstock's career. Smaller firms simply fled before authorities could bring them to trial. Tantalizing entries written by Anthony Comstock throw suspicion upon a few relatively well known publishing firms that integrated objectionable titles into their publishing lists. Given warning that certain of the firm's offerings faced prosecution, the prominent Philadelphia reprint publisher T.B. Peterson surrendered copies of G.W.M. Reynolds titles in the 1880s and escaped prosecution. The books that Comstock sought to repress ranged from notorious fiction to those containing no text at all, as his arrest records show.

Enforcement practices consolidated into a formidable barrier against producing obscene literature for commercial sale at the same time that the American publishing industry came to a consensus about the role of law in protecting the rights of foreign authors. In 1891, the United States became a signatory to the Berne Convention and for the first time pledged to honor an international copyright agreement, acknowledging the formal role that national policies played in promoting the production of certain types of literature.

Books that exemplify the complexity of American social experience and reading habits are crucial to exploring the interplay of thought and practice. It is not possible to study the social context of obscenity without measuring, analyzing, and holding actual books. Technological history is fundamental to the conservation of artifacts and to scholarship in fields ranging from sexuality and law to publishing and labor history. As artifacts of ideas about social relations and part of a genre that may well reflect American

publishing trends better than works from the literary canon, books considered indecent during the nineteenth century are among the most valuable research sources available to scholars today. Rather than being shut outside the gates of American libraries or secreted away, uncataloged, in administrative offices, books controversial in the past and those whose acquisition with public funds may be difficult to defend today are a core element of understanding American culture and technological history.

Overview of Chapters

Much work remains to be done in closing gaps in our understanding of the publication and survival of books, and examining the structures of prior studies bares biases that have quietly informed scholarly directions. The exclusion of erotica from crucial conservation studies reflects a predisposition to study canonical literature and to work in conjunction with the social purposes of collecting institutions. This omission calls for the development of non-destructive techniques for examining rare print objects so that a fuller view of the material practices supporting nineteenth-century print can become known. In the first of three methods for non-destructive analysis presented in this dissertation, relatively simple examination can suggest production details and, when combined with other data, inform the economic appraisal of book production, identification of regional publishing networks, and the verification of imprints.

Chapter two begins by identifying the numerous flaws in studies that have heavily influenced the conservation of American books. Knowledge about the materials from which paper has been made and the work of curators in caring for the documents upon which most historians rely form a feedback loop that shapes our ability to undertake

historical research, particularly in the absence of publisher business records. The paper conservation research of the Barrow Research Laboratory should be analyzed closely to inquire into the relationship of genres and papermaking materials. Those influential studies excluded erotica. By identifying flaws in Barrow research, non-destructive methods appropriate to rare artifacts and accessible to non-scientists can be developed.

Faith in technological progress conflicted with the diverse uses of print, particularly in papermaking, as the reconstructed history of that industry shows in chapter three. Arguably the most important production process influencing the survival of print, papermaking also is the most complex. Material considerations forced papermakers to experiment with a variety of fibers even while intensifying production. Aided in part by government policies, they turned to native raw materials, invested in higher levels of capitalization, and automated numerous processes. Chemical wood pulp and Fourdrinier production came to dominate the industry in part because of the support that flexible production and the experience of innovation provided. Further, the political economy of print at the fundamental level of paper manufacturing profoundly influenced the availability of erotica and forms in which consumers came into contact with print, but previous histories have downplayed the role of straw fibers in the development of the American papermaking industry.

Americans relied more heavily upon domestic fiber sources such as straw, within the field of erotica as well as in the general arena of publishing, than has been noted previously. Chapter four presents two specific examples of paper production with straw from newspaper publishing and intaglio printing for book illustrations. In the first, the presence of an impression made by a wire seam on one 1843 newspaper offers evidence

that Americans pursued commercial production of straw printing paper at least a decade before caustic soda processes were transferred from England to the United States. In the second, an explicit engraving in a rebound book discussed in more detail later in the dissertation can be dated through its similarities to straw substrates that Americans produced during the 1850s.

Turning to the study of books listed by Ashbee and others within associated publishing lists, chapter five finds among them evidence that the most extensive use of straw in book papers appears to have been as an extender of rag-based pulp. The visual identification of shives, or clusters of undigested fibers, narrows the range of likely production practices, aids in forming an estimate of production costs, and points toward the regional origins of certain clandestine publications. Changes in fiber sources and printing processes affected the constellation of practices associated with the use of color, publisher marketing strategies, and consumption. Thus, chapter six shifts attention to the place of the titles studied in this dissertation within the technological trajectories associated with papermaking and the application of color. Paper production and printing processes intersected with the ways that colorants could be used as dyes and inks. The pressures of material considerations upon design elements manipulated the relationship of texts and illustrations. The binding styles of books reflected a publisher's anticipated publishing opportunities and profits. Nineteenth-century industrial practices imply linkages between erotica production and publisher marketing strategies, while suggesting new lines of inquiry involving gendered labor patterns.

The following section surveys illustrations as chief examples of printing practices that spanned a century of erotica produced by Americans. The continually increasing

consumption of visual culture from 1840 to 1890 took place at the same time that an astounding range of technical developments affected the printing industry. While surviving books cannot reveal the depth to which specific techniques were employed, they show that the range of printing styles in erotica is, indeed, representative of nineteenth-century American printing. No publisher used paper traceable through watermarks to a specific mill, but artists and engravers sometimes signed their works. Production details hidden in illustrations or recurring plates also offer clues about the complex networks that publishers coordinated. The remarkable fluidity of technical processes, publisher resources, and viewer preferences that stimulated the confluence and severance of illustrations and text attest to the cycles of production and consumption of erotic print. Through production, erotica became increasingly Americanized.

Chapters seven and eight delve into the business practices of William Berry of Boston, outlining the most important of the analytical methods presented in this dissertation and showing how his books became part of larger networks of erotica publishing. Berry left no business records, but production marks from the machines that printed his publications link his practices to the technological trajectory of the Adams power press. The most popular American book printing press from 1840 through the 1870s, the Adams power press conveyed specific labor practice connotations. The patterns of marks left by gripper mechanisms on that press can reveal the skill levels of those who operated it. Those “mechanical fingerprints” suggest that historians must further study the gendered labor patterns of individual firms in order to verify whether printers indeed employed women to work on presses churning out semi-erotic publications. Analysis of the gripper marks left by the mechanism transporting sheets

through that press can establish the technologies, capitalization, and levels of worker skills found within a print shop.

The years preceding federal prosecution especially offer insight into the melding of racy publications into the growing market for erotic books that inspired federal prosecution. During the 1840s and 1850s, William Berry's various enterprises spanned sensational fiction and obscene publications as well as newspapers and books. Originating in Boston's second-tier publishing sector, his publishing list became woven into the New York erotica trade of the 1850s and 1860s. Chapter eight follows a trail of typographical evidence showing that his publications appeared more frequently listed in advertisements containing sexually explicit works. By the late 1850s, his operations became submerged within a prospering clandestine publishing industry. An early manager of George Thompson, the most prolific author of American erotica of the mid-nineteenth century, Berry suffered financially while Thompson made the transition to New York's publishing industry and became a partner in ventures with wider national distributions. Berry lost his own gambit to emerge as a publisher along a Boston-to-New York axis, and other firms absorbed his stock. Artifacts and their evidence can be combined with more traditional sources such as publisher advertisements, public directories, and imprint information to distinguish regional markets for erotica in the 1840s and 1850s.

Publisher advertisements and typographical evidence connect Berry's publishing *œuvre* with the rise of New York as the center of the nation's popular book trade. By the 1850s, the majority of erotica publishing had shifted to New York. From William Haines and Jeremiah H. Farrell to Frederic A. Brady and J.W. Bouton, histories of certain

entrepreneurs can be pieced together. Tracing William Berry's activities opens the way for studying more explicit works and publishers prosecuted by state and federal authorities. Primarily associated with semi-erotic content, Berry became implicated through overlapping publishing lists with more explicit publications, although paper evidence hints at a distinct Philadelphia market during the 1840s. Boston remained a competitor through the early 1850s. By the outbreak of the Civil War, however, New York dominated the nation's book publishing, with soldiers and the public consuming adventure stories, sensational fiction, and illicit literature.

Technological changes in the printing industry and federal support for domestic manufacturing, commerce, and print connected literature to readers and helped publishers to develop marketing strategies. Books present a special category of products: they are material objects with an overt ideological purpose and an extended framework in which a reader can construct meaning. More than most consumer products, print represents formal interplay between form and content. The cultural practices relating to the material forms of print include technology. Reading books as artifacts can contribute to our understanding of how certain texts came to be defined through legal practices as obscene. Books can provide evidence of the technical and social configurations that created them.

The first step in learning about the role of print in the construction of meaning lies in the study of the material forms and the forces that have shaped their persistence, beginning with their physical survival. The history of books cannot be written without artifacts. Turning to the books themselves can help unravel the unrecorded and often clandestine practices that made it possible for publishers to supply a growing market for indecent literature in America during the nineteenth century.

Chapter Two

"…And Withal Presented in So Frail and Perishing a Form"

> It may be alleged that our newspaper literature, whatever its excellence, is so scattered, so mixed up with what is impure and noxious, and withal presented in so frail and perishing a form, that it can neither be made available nor preserved. But it is preserved; perhaps not on the shelves of the student's library, but in the hearts and intellects of the people; in the actions it prompts, and in the public measures, the adoption of which it secures.[1]
>
> — *The Boston Quarterly Review* (1839)

Even ephemeral forms of literature ripple into the beliefs, thoughts, and actions of a people, redirecting social energies and the use of power, as the editor of *The Boston Quarterly Review* argued. Tracing that diffusion of culture is difficult under the best of circumstances, however. Without the artifacts that gave shape to the assimilation of ideas, it is difficult to chart the intersecting paths of content and form. Studying the conservation of artifacts therefore is indispensable to learning about the interplay of ideas, materiality, and culture. Publishers moderated literary and technical practices, navigating government regulation, material supplies, and consumer demand. Erotica, in particular, is an underutilized source of knowledge about the often-messy intersections of government power, innovation, and readership.

Artifacts conveying content that contravenes social conventions are a special challenge to conservators. Institutions of record have succeeded unevenly in preserving that portion of the nation's literary heritage. Indecent books have not been collected in

[1] "American Literature," *The Boston Quarterly Review* 2, no. 1 (1839): 1-26, quote from 18. In this interesting article, the editor critiqued Emerson's opinion that producing great literature required the separation of an author from the commonness of society. Rather than criticizing Americans for striving for better material circumstances, the editor chided scholars for not celebrating a national spirit that created and distributed leisure and affluence. From a preoccupation with everyday toil as an instrument of improvement, he argued, a higher American culture would blossom.

proportion to their popularity at the time of publication, and most libraries have failed to hold such items over time. Literature considered "impure and noxious" typically has been excluded from conservation studies intended to support the preservation of fragile documents.

The methods and findings of the W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory have been particularly important to the field of conservation.[2] Barrow investigations successfully "scientized" librarian concerns about the longevity of historical documents without challenging the status of research collections as keepers of the American literary tradition. Library historian Thomas Augst writes that

> …the Western ideal of the library has represented not merely a collection of books gathered for some purpose but also arguments about the location, form, and power of knowledge in particular social and historical contexts. As a symbolic space, a type of collection, a kind of building, the library gives institutional form to our collective memory.[3]

The decision of determining which books are passed to subsequent generations validates the cultural authority of repositories and informs the direction of new scholarship. The materials from which a book was made, physical appearance, the quantities produced, and recurring demand for a work influence the persistence of print, possibly making

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[2] The published studies of William J. Barrow or of the W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory include: W.J. Barrow, *Manuscripts and Documents: Their Deterioration and Restoration* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press, 1955); Randolph W. Church, ed., *Deterioration of Book Stock – Causes and Remedies: Two Studies on the Permanence of Book Paper*, Virginia State Library Publications, No. 10 (Richmond: The Virginia State Library, 1959) and *The Manufacture and Testing of Durable Book Papers* (Richmond, Va.: The Virginia State Library, 1960); W.J. Barrow, *Permanence/Durability of the Book: A Two-Year Research Program*, Publication No. 1 (Richmond, Va.: W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory, 1963); W.J. Barrow, *Permanence/Durability of the Book – III. Spray Acidification* (Richmond, Va.: W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory, 1964); W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory, *Permanence/Durability of the Book – V. Strength and Other Characteristics of Book Papers, 1800-1899* (Richmond, Va.: Barrow Research Laboratory, 1967), *Permanence/Durability of the Book – VI. Spot Testing for Unstable Modern Book and Record Papers* (Richmond, Va.: Barrow Research Laboratory, 1969), and *Permanence/ Durability of the Book – VII. Physical and Chemical Properties of Book Papers, 1507-1949* (Richmond, Va.: W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory, 1974).

[3] Thomas Augst, "American Libraries and Agencies of Culture," introduction to the special issue *The Library as an Agency of Culture*, Thomas Augst and Wayne A. Wiegand, guest eds., *American Studies* 42, no. 3 (2001): 5-22, quote from 16.

certain genres more likely to be retained. Publishing, manufacturing, distribution, reception, and survival are interdependent aspects of studying print, according to Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, although the persistence of a collection in the hands of an individual or an institution most often determines what items will survive and be studied in the future.[4] The selection of books evaluated for research by Barrow studies reflected long-standing biases toward literature of achievement collected in multiple copies by institutional holders. Researchers have failed to question sufficiently the protocols by which print artifacts were chosen and to delve into the relationship of material processes to the types of books from which samples were drawn.

Barrow studies replicated the social distinctions accorded to various literary genres. Because of this, valuable information about the range of technological processes that made possible an explosion of diverse print culture in nineteenth-century America has not yet been gathered. The failure of bibliographers to examine critically those methods of sampling and evaluation have lent a sheen of transparency to findings that are less representative than they appear.

While much can be learned from that research, sensitivity to the structure of, and unanswered questions implicit in, the findings of those studies requires a reevaluation of American papermaking history. Non-destructive methods appropriate to the study of rare and often unique books can enlarge our understanding of the technical processes that supported the production of socially objectionable books. At the same time, examining erotica can enhance knowledge for conserving objects of American print culture.

[4] Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, "A New Model for the Study of the Book," in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society*, The Clark Lectures 1986-1987 (1993; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001), 5-43.

Destructive sampling has encouraged the testing of books deemed valuable as intellectual works and therefore easily procured because of their persistence in research collections. Publishers of canonical literature may not necessarily be representative technological practitioners of their eras, however. The focus of Barrow testing upon items donated by major repositories has substantiated the role of those institutions as guardians of a national literary heritage. It also has minimized awareness that much of the actual publishing output of the nineteenth century – and the works read by large audiences of the day – have not been included in such collections in large enough numbers to allow their analysis. Selection processes embedded in conservation studies have perpetuated a predisposition against socially marginalized literature. Erotic publications, like alternative technological practices, are constantly in danger of being excised from the historical record.

Despite qualifications that must be made in order to derive genre-specific data from Barrow findings, previous research can be mined in order to learn what data may be relevant to the study of indecent books. Through the analysis of surviving erotic publications and attention to the non-standard practices that pervaded the nineteenth-century American papermaking industry, this chapter sets forth non-destructive comparative methods accessible to general historians.[5] Determining the features of the paper that a printer used aids more than conservators; it also can assist historians to estimate printing costs and access to supply networks, thus shedding light on how a specific publisher brought to market specific types of publications.

[5] Workers in the paper trade have long described paper through a variety of physical, mechanical, and fiber composition observations, such as thickness, tear strength, and microscopic fiber identification. See G.S. Witham, *Modern Pulp and Paper Making: A Practical Treatise* (New York: The Chemical Catalog Company, Inc., 1920), 465.

Defining the Crisis

The long-term results of nineteenth-century papermaking practices have been uneven. Archivists, challenged by difficult conservation problems, have often failed to differentiate pulps and production methods, resulting in inaccurate treatments and the resolution of problems through trial and error. Grouping together the results of multiple manufacturing processes obscures the flexibility of American production prior to 1880, when the Fourdrinier machine finally came to dominate the American industry. Erotic publications, which are among the more rare objects in need of conservation, help to expose the trail of business practices that has been considered largely untraceable.[6]

Frequent rag crises during the nineteenth century drove papermakers to assay a range of fiber options. Unsurprisingly, experiments such as frog spittle, dung, and fish flesh were not commercially successful. Imported mummies provided quality fiber but risked the health of the women who sorted rags prior to pulping. Straw, hemp, and wood were among the most promising substitutes for cotton and linen rags, especially as fiber sources and techniques proved insufficient to meet higher levels of production and demand around 1850. Despite the measure of frustration that these experiments showed, American producers maintained faith in the ability of technical processes to render plentiful raw resources and waste into marketable commodities.[7]

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[6] Nicholson Baker in *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper* (New York: Random House, 2001) cites the Library of Congress document *Holdings of American Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Newspapers Printed on Wood Pulp Paper*, Library of Congress Serials Division (May 1950), which offered a guide to publications most in need of microfilming. " 'Wood pulp paper' here just seems to mean everything published after 1870, aside from several titles printed especially for libraries in the thirties on ultra-durable rag paper," writes Baker (34). "Pulp" and "wood pulp" have, indeed, come to describe cheap papers of the nineteenth century. This collapsing of categories contradicts technical realities: Long-lasting papers can be made with wood, and the use of rags offers no guarantee against acidification.

[7] Joel Munsell's exhaustive list of alternative fiber sources considered for paper production provides a humorous note to the task of fiber identification. Joel Munsell, *A Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making*

Commercial advantages accrued to papermakers whose products offered immediate satisfaction of quantity and quality demands while cutting costs. The trade secrecy that resulted has made it difficult to separate actual shop practices from the methods reported in histories of the trade. Clues about workplace knowledge can be gleaned, however, from nineteenth-century trade literature. Further complicating the study of American papermaking has been the assumption of the interchangeability of American and English techniques. English and Scottish papermakers formed a large part of the American industry's antebellum male workforce, bringing their trade practices and workshop culture to the United States. Yet Americans employed machines, fibers, and chemicals in ways that reflected the scarcities and riches of a different environment. A wealth of literature about English papermaking forms a vital core for any historian of the American paper trades, but reliance upon these references must be tempered with knowledge about undocumented practices in the United States. Certain data about national practices only can be derived from the study of paper as a primary source.

A variety of practices characterized American manufacture of printing papers through the 1870s. Batch production encouraged innovation, bringing informal work practices and planned experimentation to bear upon the search for cheaper and more plentiful materials. Papermakers closely guarded their shop practices to maintain competitive advantages for selling their own products. Evidence of trials with straw and ground wood can be detected with the trained eye, and early caustic soda processes to break down fibers occasionally left visual clues. During the 1850s, breakthroughs brought grinding and caustic alkali methods to the attention of papermakers who had long

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(Albany, N.Y.: J. Munsell, 1856). See also Dard Hunter, *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*, 2nd ed. (1947; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1978).

experimented with straw, wood, and rope as fiber additives. Potash, straw, ground wood, caustic soda, and chemical wood pulp progressively changed the face of papermaking, affecting the complexity of caring for paper artifacts.

By the 1890s, the combination of wood fiber, sulfite pulping, and tub sizing with alum had established a firm foothold in the nation's printing paper manufacturing capacity. Though many suspected that chemical processing and other developments greatly weakened the structure of paper over time, those concerns were not enough to stifle the efforts of the paper industry to keep up with consumer demand. At the end of the nineteenth century, chemical changes related to fibers came to be perceived as the culprit causing deterioration. William J. Barrow asserted that a leading English scholarly organization determined gas lighting to be the source of compositional change and that his own research therefore changed the direction of knowledge about conservation.[8]

The actual report described a variety of instances that could cause discoloration and weakness in paper, however. Residual chemicals from processing, calendaring, and mineral loading to smooth the paper surface all might affect paper properties.[9] Years

[8] Barrow, *Permanence/Durability of the Book – V. Strength and Other Characteristics,* 7. The article that Barrow cites is "Report of the Committee on the Deterioration of Paper," *Journal of The Society of Arts* [London], May 20 and July 1, 1898 (46: 597-601 and 698-699). In setting the stage for his study of nineteenth-century book papers, Barrow obliquely referred to his own failed attempt to promote lamination as a method for isolating ground wood substrates and to discourage the browning of paper. He not only misjudged the cause of deterioration (light, rather than exposure to air, turned lignin brown) but also created the need to repair the artifacts his treatment had damaged. Nevertheless, his transference of alkalization techniques from the sphere of paper chemists to that of conservators and his promotion of the urgency of saving historical documents from deterioration changed the state of knowledge of the field of conservation. The complexity of papermaking chemistry has encouraged librarians and special collections professionals to rely heavily upon Barrow's work. Many aspects of Barrow's career have been detailed by Sally Roggia, "William James Barrow: A Biographical Study of His Formative Years and His Role in the History of Library and Archives Conservation From 1931 to 1941" (Columbia University, Ph.D. Dissertation, Graduate School of Library Service, 1999).

[9] Summarized in Edward A. Dawe, *Paper and Its Uses: A Treatise for Printers Stationers and Others* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1914), 63-65. Additionally, Dawe's volume includes thirty-four paper samples that are helpful in gaining familiarity with various rag, esparto, and rag papers and the aging characteristics of paper.

before Barrow's work, and certainly by the 1930s, paper chemists expressed certainty about a link between pH levels and paper deterioration.[10]

Twentieth-century collections specialists and historians reported that rag papers predating 1800 often faded little and could be handled easily. On the other hand, paper produced after the mid-nineteenth century, and especially after the Civil War, tended to discolor and become brittle. "Slow Fires," a widely-circulated video produced by the Library of Congress, caught the attention of concerned members of the library profession who dealt in rare books. The 1987 documentary film contained a dramatic sequence showing a Library of Congress staff member crumbling and blowing away a brown, acidified leaf from a nineteenth-century book. That depiction shocked viewers and became the clarion call to action on behalf of books.[11]

Conservation scholars since the mid-twentieth century have argued that American historical records on paper produced after 1870 are in danger of crumbling into unreadable pieces. In practice, the longevity of all papers manufactured since 1850 have become suspect, with that year becoming a demarcation between substrates considered more permanent and those likely to become embrittled. In line with recommendations by the Barrow Research Laboratory, projects to reformat the texts through the production of facsimiles, microfilm, or digital copies have followed a cutoff of 1850 for preservation.

With acidification eating its way through historical documents, preservation has become a priority for the library profession. Massive microfilming and other transfer

[10] On paper chemistry research of which Barrow should have been aware, see R.W. Sindall, *The Manufacture of Paper* (1908; reprint, New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1919); Arthur E. Kimberly and Adelaide L. Emley, "A Study of the Deterioration of Book Papers in Libraries," Bureau of Standards Miscellaneous Publication No. 140 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933); and B.W. Scribner, " Preservation of Newspaper Records," National Bureau of Standards Miscellaneous Publication No. 145 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934).

[11] Terry Sanders, "Slow Fires" (Washington, D.C.: Council on Library Resources, 1987). Written by Ben Maddow; narrated by Robert MacNeil; a presentation of the American Film Foundation.

techniques put into place after World War II helped to preserve the texts but not the print objects themselves, and quality and longevity issues germane to the new formats became evident by the 1950s.[12] Chemical testing and the fiber analysis of book paper samples from several centuries by the Barrow Research Laboratory in the 1960s further supported advocates of drastic measures to safeguard the nation's print heritage.

Incentives to make use of government-sponsored defense technologies promoted the transfer of texts into forms that seemed more accessible to a technologically-minded bureaucracy, asserts media critic Nicholson Baker. Preserving texts often came at the cost of sacrificing the physical artifacts, as well as the details of color and spatiality that framed a publication's reception. Microfilming muted expansive, colorful cartoon pages in late nineteenth-century newspapers into black-and-white images, and indifferent workmanship in duplication produced incomplete or impermanent copies. Processing technicians guillotined newspapers and books from their bindings to create flat masters, then typically threw away originals. Under the best of circumstances, the selection of an edition for filming increased access to a single reformatted publication but reduced the diversity of materials available. Most illustrations were excised from the final record because only textual matter was deemed essential to the bibliographical record.[13]

Scratched, dark, or sloppily transferred microfilms became even more difficult to read over time. The narrowing availability of editions made it impossible for historians to

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[12] See, for instance, Verner Clapp, et al, "Are Your Microfilms Deteriorating Acceptably?" *Library Journal*, March 15, 1955, which gave guidelines for evaluating microfilm holdings and facilities. The immense push to preserve print while saving space fed the rapid growth in the 1960s of microprinting, a new sector in the commercial printing industry.

[13] Baker, *Double Fold*. Standard procedures for microfilming require the disbinding of collections of newspapers and books, writes Baker, and library managers embraced new media as opportunities to free up shelf space previously allotted to books. An influential source published by the library profession's major professional organization during that time is that of Ralph E. Ellsworth, *The Economics of Book Storage in College and University Libraries* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Association of Research Libraries and The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1969).

track editorial changes for fast-moving stories published in multiple editions. Most importantly for material culture and bibliographical research, the new formats conveyed few, if any, of the physical details that distinguished original prints, and institutions rarely retained the originals. The new copies of record indicated little about technical processes and obscured evidence that at one time had verified a publication's authenticity. As early as the mid-1960s, one conservation scientist felt compelled to argue for the preservation of at least one original of all converted materials.[14]

In hindsight, it is clear that preservation efforts have wielded a two-edged sword. The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed a reaction against actions that impinged upon the survival of original artifacts. Major research libraries and their curatorial staffs began emphasizing the conservation of artifacts along with the preservation of intellectual content. Too frequently, establishing such policies could not be supported by institutional dollars, however. Less affluent institutions merely switched from one style of non-book format to another, expanding holdings not through the acquisition of books but through electronic formats, such as digital media. These trends have winnowed non-standard publications from collections, even while stretching scarce budgets and allowing greater access to electronic versions.

Genre and the Persistence of Print

During the nineteenth century, bibliographical reference works detailing American imprints, bookselling, and publishing houses largely omitted books that passed the edge of respectability and certainly those considered obscene. Even the semi-erotic

[14] G.R. Williams, "Preservation of Deteriorating Books" in *Library Journal* 91, no. 1 (Jan. 1, 1966): 51-56 and no. 2 (Jan. 15, 1966): 189-194.

works of George Thompson, a prolific fiction author known for his sensationalism, nearly escaped notice by literary bibliographers of his own day. Henry Spencer Ashbee's bibliographies provide far more information about that author and his publications than sources frequently relied upon by scholars of American literary works.[15]

Edward Jacobs and Antonia Forster in their analysis of British bibliographical reference works have noted the tendency of even the most exhaustive sources to overlook books outside of prominent publishing circles. The very reliability and authority of national bibliographical publications makes the failure of such publications to list books especially treacherous for researchers. Such omissions, according to Jacobs and Forster,

> …may tempt us to dismiss books that we no longer have as historically and culturally insignificant ephemera, but surely the growing evidence we have that our historical record – especially for books – is rife with accident, politics, and outright lacunae should make us wary of the assumption that the books our libraries now hold sufficiently represent the bibliographical past.[16]

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[15] In addition to Charles Evans' *American Bibliography. A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820*, 12 vols. (Chicago: Privately Printed for the Author, 1903-1934) and Roger Pattrell Bristol, *Supplement to Charles Evans's American Bibliography* (Charlottesville, Va.: Published for the Bibliographical Society of America and the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia [by] University Press of Virginia, 1970), key references for studying imprints are Henry E. Huntington Library, *American Imprints, 1648-1797, in the Huntington Library, supplementing Evans' American bibliography*, comp. Willard O. Waters (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933); Nikolaus Trübner, *Trübner's Bibliographical Guide to American Literature. A Classified List of Books Published in the United States of America During the Last Forty Years* (London: Trübner, 1859); O.A. Roorbach, *Bibliotheca Americana. Catalog of American Publications, including Reprints and Original Works, from 1820 to 1852 inclusive. Together with a List of Periodicals Published in the U.S.* (New York: Roorbach, 1852) and subsequent supplements through 1861; continued by James Kelly, *American Catalogue of Books Published in the United States from Jan. 1861 to Jan. 1871* (New York: Wiley, 1866-1871) and supplements through 1911; and *Publishers' Weekly, the American Book Trade Journal*, beginning with volume 1, 1872. A single Thompson book, published by William Berry of Boston, was recorded in Roorbach's compilation. For bookselling and publishing, see especially "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," vol. 49 in 2 parts, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, ed. Peter Dzwonkoski (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1986); Henry Walcott Boynton, *Annals of American Bookselling, 1638-1850* (1932; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1991); and Madeleine B. Stern, ed., *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century America* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1980).

[16] Edward Jacobs and Antonia Forster, " 'Lost Books' and Publishing History: Two Annotated Lists of Imprints for the Fiction Titles Listed in the Circulating Library Catalogs of Thomas Lowndes (1776) and M. Heavisides (1790), of Which No Known Copies Survive," *PBSA* 89, no. 3 (September 1995): 262.

The authors found that eight percent of the fiction titles carried by the two libraries they studied were unlisted in the two most exhaustive English literature bibliographies, *English Short-Title Catalog* and *National Union Catalog*. Just over half of those unlisted titles were located using other sources. The authors determined that eighteenth-century English circulating libraries not only managed the distribution of books but also arranged for the publication of certain titles – with more than triple the likelihood than general publishers of having their publications fail to survive. National bibliographies record the books preserved by institutions that typically have government or academic connections, but circulating libraries tended to publish lower-quality books. Both facts relating to circulating materials contributed to lower survival rates.[17]

American bibliographies likewise have their gaps. Thorough scholarship recording early American imprints has not captured the diversity of printing during the handpress period (roughly defined until 1800) upon which most bibliographical research has focused.[18] Additionally, many of the most widely read books in the United States during the nineteenth century were relatively ephemeral and similarly published by smaller firms. Passed from hand to hand or indifferently kept, some books literally were read to pieces. Books intensely popular for brief periods, communally consumed, or whose materials failed to withstand the passage of time have become scarce.[19] Other

[17] Jacobs and Forster, " 'Lost Books'," 260-297.
[18] According to an estimate by Lawrence C. Wroth, it is likely that only one-fourth to one-fifth of the print artifacts from 1639 to 1783 have been documented, despite vigilant scholarly attention to the task. Most subject to exclusion from the historical record, he speculated, were the ephemera of everyday life, such as broadsides or songsheets. Lawrence C. Wroth, "Book Production and Distribution from the Beginning to the American Revolution," in Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America: A History of the Making and Selling of Books in the United States* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1952), 27. Wroth's own source was apparently Evans' *American Bibliography.*
[19] Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, "A New Model for the Study of the Book," in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society*, The Clark Lectures 1986-1987 (1993; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001), 5-43.

books, such as Meredith Owen's *Lucile*, survived because of their social significance as objects rather than influence as a texts.[20]

Historians often have ascribed the growing availability of cheap books in the nineteenth century to the mechanized production of paper, yet little is known about the dates by which publishers of specific types of publications relied exclusively on machine-made paper supplies, or about whether cost or quality most encouraged the transition. Whether periodical and book publishers differed in paper requirements and what distinctions proved important have not been discovered. How to differentiate among paper grades and whether conscious actions matched types to format or genres are questions yet to be answered, according to John Bidwell.[21]

Technological advances allowed publishers to market all types of books to wide audiences in nineteenth-century America, but certain genres have been more closely associated with early technical developments. For instance, religious publishers took early advantage of new technologies to ensure that Bibles, tracts, and periodicals received wide distribution and could be produced in forms that anticipated the social purposes of religious print.[22]

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[20] Gift books or decorative editions of well-known authors have persisted in part through their cultural significance as objects of middle-class status. Books served as decorative objects and tokens of affection as well as emblems of social stature. Meredith Owen's epic poem *Lucile* (Boston: Ticknor & Fields, 1860) became a best seller for reasons other than its author's literary skill. The book's continuing popularity derived from its importance as a cultural artifact. Women displayed on parlor bookshelves especially attractive copies received as gifts from callers, encouraging the reprinting and repackaging of a tediously long epic poem into the 1930s. Sidney Huttner's *Lucile* Project, based at the University of Iowa's Center for the Book, has tracked the publishing history of the book. See Sidney F. Huttner, "America's Favorite Book, 1860-1930: Owen Meredith's *Lucile*," a paper read at Rare Book School, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, Aug. 2, 2004. As a point relevant to this chapter, *Lucile* appears twice within the list of samples studied by the Barrow Research Laboratories (Boston, 1884 and New York, 1892).

[21] John Bidwell, "The study of paper as evidence, artefact, [sic] and commodity," in Peter Davison, ed., *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth-Century Bibliography* (1992; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1998), 69-82.

[22] Mass-produced and widely distributed publications mirrored the evangelical imperative of many Protestant organizations in the early nineteenth century, with the management of production encouraging

Book production techniques associated with the spread of novels and other fiction during the nineteenth century included low-quality paper. Paper comprised one-half to one-third of a book's production costs, depending upon the binding expense. Alternative fibers and papermaking processes that preceded chemical wood pulps have not been studied by scholars, although like the low wages of female bindery workers and production on mid-level power presses, paper type and quality became a major source for cost savings in book production and therefore in widening access to print.

W.J. Barrow Research Laboratory

The findings of William J. Barrow and the institution named after him were among those most commonly consulted by late twentieth-century collecting institutions and conservation professionals, and those studies remain important today. Barrow defined the field of conservation research through his investigations into the chemical and fiber composition of medieval and modern papers.[23] A proponent of intervention, Barrow advocated preventative deacidification of paper rather than amelioration or repair. Although increasingly controversial, his methods of assessing the likely aging patterns of

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bureaucratic styles that presaged business forms later in the century, according to David Paul Nord, *The Evangelical Origins of Mass Media in America, 1815-1835* (Columbia, S.C.: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 1984). Stereotyping embodied the unchanging nature of scripture, allowing a publisher to avoid textual alteration over the course of extended press runs, writes Paul C. Gutjahr, *An American Bible: A History of the Good Book in the United States, 1777-1880* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). Candy Gunther Brown makes the point, however, that competing editions from publishers challenged unitary views of the Bible; see *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[23] Barrow's attempts to speed up the aging of paper through exposure of samples to heat have been improved significantly by the American Society for Testing and Materials. Exposure to higher temperature, more light flux, and more intense amounts of the atmospheric pollutant nitrogen dioxide can produce the effects of natural aging much more closely. See R. Bruce Arnold, "New tools to measure long-term paper stability," ICC – Works of Art on Paper – Books, Documents and Photographs: Techniques and Conservations, Proceedings from the Manuscripts at the Baltimore Congress, September 2-6, 2002.

paper and of estimating durability through a folding test remain important markers for predicting deterioration ranges for substrates.[24]

Barrow's study of nineteenth-century book papers remains the largest sampling of American books conducted. By testing fifty titles from each decade, he found that samples published before 1850 contained exclusively rag fibers. The majority of those papers had been sized with glue or gelatin in order to create a smooth, less absorptive surface more adapted to printing. Papers produced during the next three decades exhibited increasing amounts of non-rag materials and rosin sizing. From 1870 to 1899, a small but growing number of blended fibers appeared with alum-and-rosin sizing. Rather than mixtures in which rags predominated over small additions of straw or ground wood, books contained widely varying fibers combinations and percentages. Rag, straw, ground wood, and chemically-treated wood turned up in complex combinations.[25]

Barrow's contribution to the field of document conservation is undeniable. He studied hundreds of samples of manuscripts and books dating from the sixteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. He carefully identified inks, fibers, residual pH,

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[24] In *Double Fold*, Nicholson Baker's eloquent defense of preserving the physical record of print exposed the most egregious errors of special collections administrators who threw away originals once microfilmed or who inadvertently destroyed items while attempting preventative deacidification. Despite the harshness of his charges against specific administrators who were working through difficult problems with the best professional knowledge available at that time, Baker's essays present compelling links between an occupation eager to professionalize its practices, funding opportunities available for scientific initiatives in the humanities, and government research programs focused on data management.

[25] Barrow, *Permanence/Durability of the Book – V. Strength and Other Characteristics*, 6. Barrow found that printing ink caused little damage to substrates, and his research confirmed that the composition of iron gall ink, used through the nineteenth-century for writing manuscripts, posed a significant risk of acidification. The lab's study of nineteenth-century book papers avoided stringent chemical analysis, although samples had to be destroyed for the simplified tests performed. Measurements included folding endurance, tear resistance, acidity, and fiber analysis. Selected samples were analyzed for cotton and linen content, chlorides (associated with chloride bleaching), and sulfates (associated with lime water bleaching, the hardening of animal size with alum, and the filler gypsum). Library professionals largely have accepted fold rating as an indicator of paper strength. See Church, *Deterioration of Book Stock*. The broadest Barrow publication incorporated findings from several research projects into a single volume: *Permanence/ Durability of the Book – VII: Physical and Chemical Properties*. The following data are drawn from Appendix D (13-25) and Appendix E (54-70) of that work.

folding endurance, and other characteristics most associated with an artifact's ability to sustain continued handling in its original form and longevity. As Sally Roggia has noted, Barrow's own interest in preservation spurred him to study paper chemistry and to gain advice from specialists as he developed his own laminating and deacidification processes. Barrow's efforts created a bridge between the emerging conservation profession and the well-established paper science community, and publicized his own techniques while introducing scientific analysis to special collections practitioners. Although Barrow and those he influenced reported his efforts as the first to delve into acidification as a crucial issue in paper deterioration, Barrow more properly can be seen as a prime disseminator to the library and archival professions of the dangers of acidification.[26]

Barrow's tests focused on books offered for destructive testing by major American institutions near Virginia and, in a small number of cases, purchased for testing from English booksellers. They were "in general little-used, non-fiction works showing no visible evidence of heavy use, abuse, mold, or storage under unusual conditions of temperature or moisture."[27] The method by which samples were obtained resulted in a focus on non-fiction works that had been collected widely by research repositories before the middle of the twentieth century and were available in duplicates. That limitation, and the understandable reluctance of owners to part with scarce and often valuable artifacts, necessarily excluded nineteenth-century erotica from investigations. Not a single racy or obscene book identified in bibliographical sources appeared in the Barrow Laboratory's paper permanence studies of book papers from 1800 to 1899.[28]

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[26] Roggia, "William James Barrow."
[27] Barrow, *Permanence/Durability of the Book – V. Strength and Other Characteristics*, 9.
[28] The titles and imprint locations for the Barrow samples were compared against those of approximately 160 books studied in this dissertation. The chief source upon which this dissertation relies for identifying

Donated by willing institutions, his samples are a cross-section of titles considered worth acquisition by institutions that until the mid-twentieth century shunned popular fiction or poor quality workmanship. The profession of special collections management has since recognized the value of preserving examples of the breadth of print culture. Strategic acquisitions, such as widely read books, cheap publications, or the entire print record associated with a specific printer or publisher, offer insight into areas of print culture neglected by collections focused on specimens of exquisite workmanship or prized literature.[29]

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indecent books is Henry Spencer Ashbee, who, writing under the name of Pisanus Fraxi, privately published *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (1877); *Centuria Librorum Absconditorum* (1879); and *Catena Librorum Tacendorum* (1885), all bearing the subtitle of "Being Notes Bio-Biblio-Econo-graphical and Critical, on Curious and Uncommon Books." They have been reprinted as *The Encylopedia of Erotic Literature*, 3 vols. (New York: Documentary Books, 1962). Other sources consulted for non-English books and studying those of which Ashbee was not aware include: Guillaume Apollinaire, *L'enfer de la Bibliothèque Nationale. Bibliographie Méthodique et Critique de Tous les Ouvrages Composant Cette Célèbre Collection avec une Préf.* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1970); Terence J. Deakin, comp., *Catalogi Librorum Eroticorum: A Critical Bibliography of Erotic Bibliographies and Book-Catalogues* (London: C. & A. Woolf, 1964); Jules Gay, *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Relatifs à l'Amour, aux Femmes, au Mariage, et des Livres Facétieux Pantagruéliques, Scatologiques, Satyriques, etc.*, 4 vols. (Paris: J. Lemonnyer [etc.], 1894-1900); Hugo Hayn und Alfred N. Gotendorf, *Bibliotheca Germanorum Erotica & Curiosa; Verzeichnis der Gesamten Deutschen Erotischen Literatur mit Einschluss der Übersetzungen, nebst Beifügung der Originale*, 9 vols. (1912-1929; Hanau/M. Müller & Kiepenheuer, [1968]), expanded from Hayn's original one-volume publication *Bibliotheca Germanorum Erotica* (Leipzig, 1875); Patrick Kearney, *The Private Case. An Annotated Bibliography of the Private Case erotica collection in the British (Museum) Library* (London: Jay Landesman, 1981); Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English, 1800-1930: A Bibliographical Study* (Scolar Press: Hants, England, 1993); Louis Perceau, *Bibliographie du roman érotique au XIXe, siècle, donnant une description complète de tous les romans, nouvelles, et autres ouvrages en prose, publiés sous le manteau en français, de 1800 à nos jours, et de toutes leurs réimpressions ...*, 2 vols. (Paris : G. Fourdrinier, 1930); and Rolf S. Reade [Alfred Rose], comp., *Registrum Librorum Eroticorum*. Vel (sub hac specie) Dubiorum: Opus Bibliographicum Et Praecipue Bibliothecariis Destinatum, 2 vols. (London: privately printed for subscribers, 1936; reprinted, New York: Jack Brussel, 1965). The James Campbell Reddie manuscript, "Bibliographical Notes," Department of Manuscripts, British Library, London (at press marks 38.282, 38.829, and 38.830) could not be examined in the course of research for this dissertation. Newspaper advertisements and publishing lists are also helpful. Less pertinent to this dissertation but valuable for other projects are Alfred C. Kinsey Institute for Sex Research, *Sex Research: Early Literature from Statistics to Erotica, Guide to the Microfilm Collection* (Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, 1983) and Frank A. Hoffman, *Analytical Survey of Anglo-American Traditional Erotica* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, [1973]). On the difficulties of and reasons for bibliographical studies of erotica, see Ashbee, "Introduction," in *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*.

[29] Christopher de Hamel, "Tangible Artifacts," *RBM, A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 1, no. 1 (2000): 27-29.

From the middle to the close of the nineteenth century, increasingly complex combinations of fibers supplied pulp for book papers. Samples from Barrow's research can be broken down into categories of paper containing only rag; mixtures of varying amounts of rag and wood (hard, soft, chemical, and ground wood); and mixtures including straw. Categorization by fiber and decade of publication shows the increasingly varied fiber content of American books for the second half of the century:

Table 1. **American Book Paper Fibers, 1850-1899**

	Number of Book Samples Containing:				
Decade	**Rag**	**Mix**	**Woods**	**Straw**	**Total**
1850-59	44	4	3	1	48
1860-69	41	8	5	3	49
1870-79	10	39	23	16	49
1880-89	0	50	41	9	50
1890-99	0	50	39	11	50

Wood mixtures clearly dominated the pulps for the books studied after 1870, but straw remained a contributing fiber. Certain rag alternatives appeared more frequently during specific decades, although the sampling within certain years poses difficulties. Certain years are overrepresented; for example, books from 1857 account for fourteen out of forty-eight American books examined from the 1850s.

Barrow findings about acidity and fiber analysis in the second half of the century have received more attention than those of the first, perhaps because of the problematic findings that emerged. From 1800 to 1849 the acidity of papers decreased without an identifiable cause. Using examples drawn from erotic publications, evidence in the following two chapters of this dissertation points toward the growing importance of potash in American papermaking as the source of that decline, which continued until the

introduction of caustic soda in the 1850s. A more powerful alkali, caustic soda required precise balancing with controlling acids and bleaching processes, which contributed to the lower pH of papers after mid-century.

The Barrow study of book papers from 1800 to 1899 contains a great deal of usable data about the identity of the books examined, although that material has not been analyzed previously at the level of titles. The short titles, imprint locations, and publication years recorded about each item tested suggest at least three lines of analysis for bibliographers. Chief among these is that the genre of the titles tested has not been compared to the type of furnishes, or pulp mixtures, reported.

The Barrow studies examined chiefly non-fiction books relevant to the research missions of institutions of higher learning but not necessarily representative of the larger picture of nineteenth-century American publishing. Books deemed worthwhile by long-lived institutions and acquired in sufficient numbers to allow the donation of unused copies for destructive analysis comprised the majority of items, supplemented by a few others purchased from booksellers in England.

From 1800 to 1849, the 250 titles examined primarily included history, memoirs, natural science, travel, religious, and reference works. A handful of poetry volumes and miscellanies comprised less than three percent of the group. During this period, only rag papers were reported.[30] From 1850 to 1899, fiction comprised a larger number of titles but still only between ten and twenty percent for any decade.[31]

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[30] Five publications were non-fiction titles and two additional books could not be identified. Of these all-rag papers between 1800 and 1849, two hundred and three books were American, thirty-one were British, and sixteen were Continental.

[31] Most publishers of the fiction titles listed can be recognized through familiarity with standard bibliographical reference works and American publishing history. Bibliographical sources that reveal the identities of firms, their reputations, and the genres represented also are helpful. Generally, the imprint distribution of samples reflected New York's ascendance as the center of American book publishing and

The first book papers containing mixed pulp appeared in 1853 in a Bible mixing twenty percent hard wood with rag and in an elementary French language textbook with five percent straw added to rag pulp.[32] Paper from books published from 1850 to 1879 increasingly incorporated alternative fibers of a variety of types. Publishers most frequently used pulp mixtures in religious or instructional texts during that transitional period. Popular versions of classic literature and reference works appeared with more frequency from 1850 to 1879 than other genres among titles of mixed-furnish samples.

The introduction of non-rag fibers into papers escalated until by 1880 all pulps were mixed, according to Barrow, and no samples contained rag fibers. The data contain primarily non-fiction works through the 1890s, well past the most noticeable changes in paper composition. Fiction samples were, at most, only as likely as non-fiction works to have been prepared with non-rag furnishes. Examined title by title, the Barrow results do not support a direct connection between fiction as a genre and papers reportedly cheaper due to their production with non-rag fibers.

The concentration of mixed-furnish samples noted above offers an intriguing question to be pursued by historians prepared to break down aggregate findings to learn about specific samples. Future research may determine that the popular appeal of literary reprints and reference volumes may correlate with production with substitute fibers, perhaps through the marketing strategies that publishers followed in order to match anticipated reader preferences and publication features. The exclusion of illicit books

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pointed to smaller but vibrant sectors in Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and other cities. Cross referencing through on-line catalogs permits most titles to be found in extant copies, potentially allowing researchers to visually confirm evidence. Fiction titles totaled thirty-seven (with decades starting at 1850 having eight, five, six, nine, and nine, respectively). The number of titles may rise slightly as OCLC listings increase, but the genre for most of the relatively few unlisted works could be identified by through author and title associations.

[32] I. Leeser, *The Twenty-Four Books* (Philadelphia, 1853) and G. Chouquet, *First Lessons in Learning French* (New York, 1853).

precludes evaluating the relationship between fiber and textual content, unfortunately. Therefore, Barrow data cannot be used to support the popular belief among publishing historians that there existed a direct link between the availability of fiction (the genre into which erotica usually can be included) and production with non-rag fibers.

Non-Destructive Analysis

Examining the book papers in erotic publications and other rare documents requires non-destructive examination. Through the methods appropriate for studying the physical properties of indecent books, historians can remove the veil of secrecy with which American papermakers shrouded their manufacturing practices. Setting out typologies for non-destructive analysis and studying books not included in Barrow Research Laboratory research offers one way of evaluating the relationship of genre and production techniques. Defining methods that are accessible to general historians furthers the evaluation over time of highly variable subjects and researcher perceptions.

The methods described below allowed the compilation of *Appendix A* ("Twenty-Five Samples Associated with Erotic Books, 1840-1880.")[33] The copies analyzed serve as controls upon previous studies that omit racy or illicit literature because each of these volumes, at its time of publication, was considered erotic or associated closely with such literature through publisher marketing strategies.

[33] Samples for *Appendix A* were selected from among a large number of racy and erotic publications, or associated works, held by the American Antiquarian Society. Items were chosen to mirror as closely as possible the chronological range, varieties of physical condition, and publishing networks of indecent books from 1840 to 1880. A proportionately greater number of volumes were selected from the 1850s and early 1860s, a period during which publisher activity flourished and for which many more items are available. AAS does not appear to hold any American imprints from 1881 to 1890 of works listed by Henry Spencer Ashbee.

Studies undertaking non-destructive analysis of physical properties exist, but they frequently make use of relatively expensive techniques, such as high-resolution optics, X-ray technology, or devices for revealing physical details of paper surfaces, interstitial bonding, and fiber depth.[34] Nevertheless, preliminary methods can be established for the visual characterization of paper without expensive devices.

Analytical techniques that can be mastered by non-specialists are especially important in the study of clandestine literature. That class of publications raises problems in identifying false imprints, determining national origins, charting the technological trajectory of publishers, and linking literary productions to material limitations. Using relatively simple tools and observation, researchers can document the range of papers incorporated into racy and erotic books available in the United States before the widespread acceptance of chemical wood pulp around 1880. Specifying the substrate qualities visible long after a paper's manufacture allows researchers and conservators to gain a more accurate understanding of how the historical context of technological choice

[34] See Ian Christie-Miller, "Digital Imaging of Watermarks and Paper Structure," *Rare Books Newsletter* 65 (Winter-Spring 2000-2001): 68-69; H. Mommsen, et al, "X-Ray-Fluorescence Analysis with Synchroton Radiation on the Inks and Papers of Incunabula," *Archaeometry* 38 (1996): 347-357; M. Castellani and D. Ruggiero, "Betaradiography: Non-Destructive Technique for Watermark Reproduction," in *Science, Technology and European Cultural Heritage: Proceedings of the European Symposium, Bologna, Italy, June 13-16, 1989*, ed. N.S. Baer, C. Sabbioni, and A.I. Sors (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1991),735-740; David Woodward, "The Analysis of Paper and Ink in Early Maps: Opportunities and Realities," in *Essays in Paper Analysis*, ed. Stephen Spector (Washington, D.C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1987), 200-201; Richard N. Schwab, et al., "Cyclotron Analysis of the Ink [and paper] in the 42-line Bible," *PBSA* 77 (1983): 285-315; and Allan H. Stevenson, "Beta-Radiography and Paper Research," in Seventh International Congress of Paper Historians, *Communications*, ed. J.S.G. Simmons (1967), 159-168. The recent availability of the Proscope, a handheld digital microscope, allows digitization of surface fiber details at resolutions of up to 200X. This USB device promises to make possible the magnification and examination of fine details as well as limited nondestructive cellular analysis of paper fibers. Research is underway by the author to apply this device to the artifacts described below. Annlinn Kruger Grossman, conservator at the Library of Congress, has brought to the author's attention work on non-destructive techniques by J.S. Arney and Klaus Pollmeier. Their research uses a technique for gaining an image of the paper beneath photographic emulsions in order to identify textures and visual characteristics that can indicate the provenance of a photograph. See J.S. Arney, James Michel, and Klaus Pollmeier, "Technique for Analysis of Surface Topography of Photographic Prints by Spatial Analysis of First Surface Reflectance," in *Journal of Imaging Science and Technology* 46, no. 4 (2002): 350.

may relate to artifact stability. It also may give clues about the specific production strategies employed by publishers to meet consumer demand and expectations for erotica.

Extending qualitative methods to the study of artifacts produced amidst a profusion of undocumented practices during the nineteenth century exposes new facts about historical American papermaking techniques. Despite the importance of paper to print culture, paper has received relatively little attention from bibliographers. The more accessible visual aspects of type and its correlation to intellectual content have made typography a major focus of print scholarship. Especially since the development of bibliography as a field of study in the latter part of the nineteenth century, scholars have studied type to learn about the printer of a book and the editions produced. Small points of difference, particularly in type, give clues to variant impressions of a work. They also can establish criteria for private and institutional book collectors, bring forth information about publishing practices, and expose forgeries.[35]

Bindings or endpapers can aid in distinguishing versions and are accordingly noted in many bibliographical descriptions. The paper that comprises the text block, which type dominates, often may remain unremarked upon. Offering descriptions more acute than simple distinctions regarding laid and wove patterns, chainline direction, or the cancellation of leaves lies beyond the skill of many bibliographers. The processes for making paper are intricate and interdependent, and technical works about papermaking abound. “Paper-making is a complex field with an immense technical literature, and any

[35] “The most striking feature of a book is its printed text, and examination of the type and its printing is one of the quickest ways to determine fakes,” asserts Joan M. Friedman in “Fakes, Forgeries, Facsimiles and Other Oddities,” in Jean Peters, ed., *Book Collecting: A Modern Guide* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1977), 116-135, quote from 125.

bibliographer who is not also a specialist in the study of paper may be expected to feel somewhat uncomfortable in confronting the task of describing it," writes bibliographer G. Thomas Tanselle.[36]

Paper survives abundantly as a part of the history of manuscript and codex artifacts, yet often it is considered merely "a vehicle of text or a source of evidence" for intellectual content rather than an artifact reflecting complex economic, technological, and cultural systems. Scrutinized with discipline and close attention to detail, certain aspects, such as watermarks, can facilitate locating the origin of specific examples. On the other end of scholarship, a description of features helps to illuminate the historical context of a sample's production. Only the exceptional bibliographer has succeeded in the former, writes John Bidwell. Although necessarily less precise in its findings and immediate relevance to specific questions, descriptions of the varied characteristics of artifacts may well prove to be more important than tightly focused studies of singular features. "While this form of evidence may supply only general answers to particular questions, it promises to resolve more problems in the long run and, in my opinion, bears greater relevance for historical studies," writes Bidwell. Many questions might be posed about the connections among papermakers, vendors, capitalization, and publisher practices; among the most important is the unstated relationship between message and medium.[37]

Bibliographical scholars have grappled with ways to standardize the visual examinations of paper characteristics, primarily with a focus on watermarked, pre-1800

[36] G. Thomas Tanselle, "The Bibliographical Description of Paper," in *SB* 24 (1971): 27-67, quote from 29.
[37] Bidwell, "The study of paper," 69-82, esp. 72.

paper.[38] The minimum description of paper for a bibliography includes finish, thickness, and color, according to G. Thomas Tanselle.[39] To those basic categories should be added sheet formation for general historical studies and the presence of shives for the study at hand.[40] These qualities can be evaluated without destroying paper samples. By establishing descriptive measures in these five areas, scholars can determine whether a specific sample was made by hand or machine, note color differences that may relate to dyeing practices or deterioration potential, and estimate the likelihood that a publisher cut costs by purchasing "seconds," or lower-quality paper. They give critical information for estimating a paper's basis weight and identifying the printing process for which it was intended. The typologies thus aid in establishing the origins and paper costs of a larger

[38] David L. Vander Meulen, "The Low-Tech Analysis of Early Paper," *Literary Research* 13 (1988): 89-94; Bidwell, "The study of paper," 69-82; Paul Needham, "Concepts of Paper Study," in *Puzzles in Paper: Concepts in Historical Watermarks*, ed. Daniel W. Mosser, Michael Saffle, and Ernest W. Sullivan II (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2000), 1-36; Ted-Larry Pebworth, "Towards a Taxonomy of Watermarks," in *Puzzles in Paper*, 229-242.

[39] G. Thomas Tanselle, "The Bibliographical Description of Paper," *SB* 24 (1971): 27-67. Tanselle ranks the description of paper alongside that of type identification and binding as major continuations of the rigorous descriptive system advocated by Fredson Bowers in *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949; reprint with introduction by G.T. Tanselle, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1994). See Tanselle, "A Sample Bibliographical Description with Commentary," *SB* 40 (1987): 1-30. On the comparison of colors across paper samples, see Tanselle, "A System of Color Identification for Bibliographical Description," *SB* 20 (1967): 203-234. This chapter follows a modified procedure based of his methods for integrating paper characteristics into bibliographical description. Allan Stevenson established measurement criteria for watermarks in his study comparing wire and chain marks to paper watermarks; see "Chain-Indentations in Paper as Evidence," *SB* 6 (1954): 181-195. For an analysis of Stevenson's bibliographical contributions to the study of paper, see Paul Needham, "Allan H. Stevenson and the Bibliographical Uses of Paper," *SB* 47 (1994): 23-64.

[40] The terminology available to those attempting to visually identify fibers has been contradictory. Shives have been defined as "dark specks in the finished paper, due to impurities in raw materials, rags and esparto grass, or slivers of wood and flax bark or seeds in pulp or finished paper, hence 'shivery' or 'shivey' paper," by E.J. Labarre, *A Dictionary of Paper and Paper-Making Terms with Equivalents in French, German, Dutch and Italian* (Amsterdam: N.V. Swets & Zeitlinger, 1937), 226-227. *Elsevier's Dictionary* assumes modern practices by assuming shives are comprised of wood splinter, although it does distinguish slivers, also of wood, from shives by their dimensions and greater occurrences in mechanical rather than chemical pulps (F.J.M. Wijnekus, comp., *Elsevier's Dictionary of the Printing and Allied Industries in Four Languages, English, French, German, Dutch* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1967), 286 and 293. A third source declines to assume the identification of the "very small bundle of fibers that have not been separated completely in the pulping operation" that are shives, but concludes that longer and narrower splinters were wood. See *The Dictionary of Paper, Including Pulps, Boards, Paper Properties and Related Papermaking Terms* (New York: American Paper and Pulp Association, 1940), 296 and 309.

group of publications studied throughout this dissertation. Examining illicit print reveals details about the transition from craft to mechanized papermaking, the dangers of accepting imprint information at face value, and the use of paper identification in locating regional publishing networks.

Papermakers chart numerous physical, mechanical, and chemical qualities in the course of production to ensure quality control. Among the common tests in the first two categories are strength, tearing, folding, bursting, and humidity, in addition to two-sidedness, basis weight, and opacity. The latter three are associated to varying degrees with finish, thickness, color, and formation. Only chemical testing can quantify fiber content, although experience aids in the identification of fiber type and estimating basis weight, which is the heaviness of a ream of paper made in a specific sheet size. These typologies can guide researchers as they gain experience in the sensory analysis crucial to studying paper artifacts.[41]

Touch plays a key role in a printer's ability to match papers. Those with experience in print production may discern slightly more bulking in nineteenth-century paper than in modern samples, due to the greater calendaring of contemporary paper. This fact makes older papers feel more substantial than they in fact are. For example,

[41] Stains such as Herzberg's or, more comprehensively, Graff "C" can be combined with cellular examination to accurately ascertain fiber type and estimated fiber content of a given sample. Traditional microscopy requires slurrying a segment of the substrate to prepare a slide for examination under a microscope. Microscopic fiber analysis has been practiced for more than a century by paper chemists. Léon Rostaing, Marcel Rostaing, and Fleury Percie du Sert, *Précis Historique, Descriptif, Analytique et Photomicrographique des Végétaux propres à la fabrication de la cellulose et du Papier avec 50 planches en photocollographie* (Paris: H. Everling, 1900). Standard reference works for fiber identification include F.D. Armitage, *An Atlas of the Commoner Paper Making Fibres: An Introduction to Paper Microscopy* ([London]: The Guildhall Publishing Co., [1957]), which covers magnification of printed surfaces as well as a thorough explication of stains and microscopy procedures; Charles H. Carpenter and Lawrence Leney, *382 Photomicrographs of 91 Papermaking Fibers* (Syracuse: State University of New York, 1952) for the identification of individual fibers; and Marja-Sisko Ilvessalo-Pfäffli, *Fiber Atlas: Identification of Papermaking Fibers*, Springer Series in Wood Science (Espoo, Finland: The Finnish Pulp and Paper Research Institute, 1995), with individual fiber and slurry sample images for wood and non-wood fibers from around the world. These references can be applied to the non-destructive identification of fibers.

nineteenth-century fifty-pound book paper often feels midway between a fifty- and a sixty-pound modern text paper.[42]

During the era of hand production, a laid finish with deep chain lines perpendicular to thinly spaced wire lines predominated in American papermaking. Although domestic manufacturers experimented with a wove finish formed by molds with closely interlocking wires, the appearance of a wove texture on handmade paper presents an exception to the rule. American paper with a wove pattern after about 1820 indicates machine production. The pattern of the wires pressed against the side of the sheet formed against the mold or, in mechanized manufacturing, the machine belting. Couching felts transferred their fabric texture to the side of paper formed opposite of the wires, creating a slight texture variance on many sheets of paper.

Thickness can be measured by groupings or single sheets. Average thicknesses can be obtained through the former; when measuring a single leaf, the first signed page of the book (usually the initial leaf of the second gathering) should be identified as the comparative sample. Obvious deviations from that model should be noted. In the study at hand, several types of paper appear in certain publications. High-bulk papers (.13 mm or greater) may be book papers loosely formed, and lightly or not calendared. The thicker, but much weaker, paper made books thicker and seem more substantial, following a production style much more popular in England than in the United States. Very thick paper may also have been intended for use in engravings, although such a substitution would have been costly.

[42] In order to maintain the accuracy of estimates, only text papers in the works surveyed have been translated into approximate weights.

The basis weight of text papers examined in *Appendix A* for the most part ranged from thirty-two to fifty pounds. Most included easily detectable amounts of straw or other fibers.[43] Such substrates were of average to low weight compared to the basis weights of the most commonly available size of the mid-nineteenth century, which was a double medium sheet measuring 24" x 38".[44]

Bibliographers speak of the text block when discussing the paper that comprises the main textual unit of the book. More than one type of paper in the block implies a disruption in a book's printing and the substitution of a typically cheaper paper, often with a discolored or thinner substrate that make the exchange noticeable. The paper used for illustrations may be the same as that of the text if both are printed by letterpress, a relief process. Otherwise, illustrations often are on a different type of paper than the text due to the differences in printing processes or production sequences. Frontispieces or other inserted prints may be letterpress, intaglio, or lithographic. As press speeds increased during the nineteenth century, the practice of wetting book paper prior to printing became less common, lessening paper shrinkage that affected type and illustration reproduction.

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[43] Basis weight refers to the weight of a paper ream of a specific size. As modeled in *Appendix A* of this paper, weights have been calculated by comparing sheet formation, apparent composition, color, estimated bulk, finishing, and thickness for the works at hand to those of similar quality papers identified by Richard Herring in *A Practical Guide to the Varieties And Relative Values of Paper, Illustrated with Samples of Nearly Every Description, and Specially Adapted to the Use of Merchants, Shippers and the Trade. To Which is Added, a History of the Art of Paper Making* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860). No American-made sample books for printing papers dating from the antebellum period appear to exist except for *Old Paper Specimens of Three Centuries* (Chillicothe, Ohio: Private Press of Dave Webb, 1945). The bound manuscript examined was held in "Old Paper," Box 21, Harrison Elliott Collection, LOC, and contains a sampling of papers identified by publication and year but not content or basis weight. Herring's 1860 edition, containing up to 246 paper samples and the prices for 681 papers, is the best reference for the time period. By matching American papers to those of Herring and recalculating the reported weight into a standard 24" x 38" sheet, estimated weights for American paper can be obtained.

[44] Theodore De Vinne, *The Printer's Price List*, introduction by Irene Tichenor (1871; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 21-22.

Contemporaries divided paper according to its purpose, with writing, wrapping, and printing papers the principle commodities of the industry. Writing paper required hard sizing to protect the substrate from the scratch of steel pens and to halt the absorption of iron gall ink. Straw stiffened and sufficiently bodied the pulp for wrapping paper cheaply but at the cost of a producing a rough substrate. The uneven surface of straw paper discouraged its use for printing. In addition, the disadvantage of having a dark color, the paper contained inevitable surface detritus that chafed the face of type pieces and bit by bit edged presses out of alignment.

Faster printing hastened the moment of impression, in theory making strong sizing less necessary for publications printed on mechanized presses. During the 1830s, printing papers might have been sized with gelatin even if made on machinery, but increasingly they were sized in the beater or not at all. The greater viscosity of printing ink, limited letterpress impression areas, and higher speed presses decreased opportunities for printing paper to absorb liquids, making treatment with rosin and alum less necessary. While noting requirements for writing and printing papers, mill supervisor Carl Hofmann in his 1873 manual on American papermaking noted, "Printing paper therefore does not require any sizing…."[45]

Specialty papers for illustrations not printed by relief had their own specifications. The moisture inherent in lithography's grease-and-water resist technique made a well-sized paper essential. Sizing inhibited flexibility and absorption capability, making sized paper undesirable for intaglio prints. Printing from copper or steel engravings required resilient fibers with little or no sizing in order to avoid weakening the folding capacity of

[45] Carl Hofmann, *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Paper in All Its Branches* (Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1873), 82.

the paper. Rag paper best withstood being crushed into an intaglio plate's fine grooves while absorbing and pulling ink completely from the plate's recesses.[46]

When a rough idea of a paper's manufacture can be established, finish and uniformity of thickness can determine whether a paper was made by hand. Thickness can be measured by sampling a sheet on each of its four corners. For bound books, measurements should be taken at each corner and midway on all free sides, resulting in five points of analysis. To obtain an accurate reading using a device such as a micrometer, the paper should be held in place with the least possible tension and be measured in unprinted locations. Water damage, tight binding, or other factors may cause the paper to curl unnecessarily and distort the reading. Measuring thickness at multiple points balances variant readings and establishes the range for a given sheet. Readings that vary by .02 mm or more per sheet should be verified, with attention paid to the angle at which the micrometer meets the paper sample and to the tension in the sheet.

Producing uniformly thick sheets by hand manufacture required great skill, yet machine workers in the first several decades of the nineteenth century frequently turned out paper even less uniform than that of manual laborers. By the 1840s, however, machine production offered paper with fairly constant depth. Its uniformity increased throughout the century, particularly after about 1880, when the expensive and large-volume output Fourdrinier decisively dominated American printing paper production.

Measurements from a variety of machine-made papers incorporated into American books in the mid-nineteenth century indicate that variances of .01 mm were

[46] Gabriel Planche's nineteenth-century investigations found that unsized paper retained one-fourth more strength than material treated with rosin and alum in the engine, while remaining less stiff than the latter. See Gabriel Planche, *De l'industrie de la Papeterie* (Paris: Didot Freres, 1853), cited in Hoffman, *A Practical Treatise*, 82.

quite common, .02 mm less frequent but normal, and .03 mm unusual. Handmade paper rarely supplied substrates for books after 1840. On the other hand, the range of normal thicknesses for craft production included variations greater than .03 mm. Therefore, variances .04 mm or greater on a single sheet of paper during the machine era (after 1830) should be taken as evidence of hand production.[47]

Close examination can often reveal the two-sidedness of a sheet's color, which can give clues to processing techniques. For dyed papers, two-sidedness can be a useful tool in evaluating the type of dye introduced into the stock. Slight differences in color depth on opposing sides of a sheet denote a lack of chemical bonding between colorant and fibers, pointing toward a less aggressive application of alum as a mordant. On single-sided printing produced according to best trade practices, a printer impresses an image on the right side of the sheet, which was manufactured against the wire screen. Due to their weight, mineral dyes tend to accumulate on the bottom of a sheet during hand formation; in machine-made paper, suction boxes draw minerals to the top. This distinction may prove useful in assessing printer skills. Excessive addition of clay, many forms of which reduce to alumina, may also cause two-sidedness, and paper of that type will be heavier and smoother than others.[48]

The comparison of paper colors presents an especially difficult problem due to continual aging processes, the variance of viewing conditions between examinations, and

[47] The lack of mid-nineteenth century American samples with identified weights and fibers presents an acute problem for paper historians, discouraging scholarly inquiry. The most replicable sources for paper measurements are the English paper sample books of Richard Herring. Measurements for this study were taken from Herring, *A Practical Guide*, held at AAS and the Institute of Paper Science Technology, Atlanta, Georgia. Also of utility is Herring's *Paper and Paper Making, Ancient and Modern* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1855). The 1855 and 1856 printings contain 25 and 30 paper samples, respectively, but that of 1863 has none. Herring oversaw manufacture of the samples to ensure their match to his specification.

[48] Dawe, *Paper and Its Uses*, 85.

the inconsistency of color perception among observers. To remedy these problems and allow as much replicability of data as possible in the face of deteriorating objects, several practices should be followed. Establishing a core group of documents at a single institution allows for comparisons at one stated time, as well as by scholars in the future.

Artifacts should be inspected over a relatively short period to minimize excessive exposure to light sources and to ensure constant viewing conditions. Lighting levels must be accurately maintained. Daylight contains the entire light spectrum, so natural light is optimal for color comparisons. Many archival institutions have redesigned their reading rooms specifically to limit the amount of damage caused to documents by excessive exposure to light. However, ideal viewing conditions should be as close to 5000° K as possible in order to avoid metamerism, or varied perceptions of color within a single sample caused by changes in lighting conditions.[49]

Among the essential considerations is that the researcher not be color blind.[50] Color is the discernment of specific segments of the light spectrum, and paper color is the perception of light rays reflected off of a substrate. For instance, the color white contains all elements of the light spectrum. Papermakers often added blue or a mixture of dyes in small amounts to pulp in order to create a greater perception of whiteness. The

[49] Standard viewing conditions are 5000° K, according to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI 2.30-1998 "Color Prints, Transparencies, and Photomechanical Reproductions—Viewing Conditions"). While the measurement provided by the GATF RHEM indicator indicates whether non-standard light conditions predominate. Its findings are approximate, distinguishing only between the range of light spectrum associated with 5,000° K, tungsten, and cool white (fluorescent) lighting. Indicator strips available commercially offer an economical alternative to photographic light meters, as well as a much less obtrusive means of measuring lighting within an archival setting. Produced by the Graphic Arts Technical Foundation, a printing industry-sponsored professional association, RHEM light indicators can assist in determining whether an environment offers conditions roughly equivalent to natural light conditions.

[50] As unnecessary to specify as this dictum may seem, the ability to distinguish among colors is foremost among other skills in the paper trade, being even more important than knowledge of color matching, technical matters, laboratory procedures, and the working properties of materials. See American Cyanamid Company, Calco Chemical Division, *Dyestuff Data for Paper Makers: A Contribution of the Application Research Department* ([Bound Brook, N.J.]: American Cyanamid Company, 1952), 5.

introduction of a secondary dye can tint stock to varying strengths, from weak to strong. Manufacturers routinely describe paper in terms of color, hue (shading toward other colors), and degree of dullness or brightness (tendency toward or away from black).[51] In the case of aged papers, these categories should be condensed into broad categories in order to avoid over describing paper as it undergoes compositional change.

Describing aged paper creates real challenges. Virtually all book (or text) papers were produced as whites, although their original shades may have differed. Intervening decomposition, storage conditions, and color loss often obscure the original hue and brightness. Commonly available modern color matching systems fail to adequately distinguish the subtle tints among whites, encouraging researchers to simply lump apparently white papers into a single category.[52] On the other hand, making fine distinctions among shades has limited usefulness. Different environments, such as urban settings in which excessive vehicle exhaust levels exist or less polluted rural areas, can cause identical copies of a publication to discolor and age at quite different rates.[53]

The comparison of twenty-five samples located at one institution allowed the structuring of simple descriptive categories that take into consideration the physical condition of the items surveyed and presumed aging. For white papers, judgments about color can be reduced to relative classifications that indicate the direction toward which

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[51] American Cyanamid Company, *Dyestuff Data*, 126-133.

[52] Colored papers may be matched by the PANTONE Matching System, used as a tool for ink selection in the graphic arts industry. Uncoated paper PANTONE ink samples can be paired more closely with paper color than guides developed for coated printing paper or textile dyes. In 1955, the National Bureau of Standards published a manual providing terminology for color descriptions, yet reference color samples to be used in conjunction with that text have since faded. See United States Department of Commerce, *The ISCC-NBS Method of Designating Colors and a Dictionary of Color Names*, National Bureau of Standards Circular 553 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955). In light of the lack of updated color samples to accompany the textual descriptions of color provided in that publication, PANTONE colors have become the *de facto* standard.

[53] Kimberly and Emley, "A Study of the Deterioration." Indeed, as the research for this dissertation shows, paper samples from the same edition of a book held by different special collections can vary significantly in color and apparent aging.

the color tends. Only the most white papers should be noted as white. Most papers will be off white (tending toward black); aged white (tending toward yellow); beige white (tending toward beige); and chemical tan or brown (shades characteristic of browned, oxidized paper). The apparent brittleness and low tensile strength of certain papers is also a clue that can be used in concluding whether the presence of residual chemicals warrants the latter label. Graining, or the unequal adhesion of colorants to different fibers, indicates mixtures of pulp. Clumps of fibers not detectable in white paper therefore can be discerned through the speckled appearance of poorly dyed stock mixtures.

Formation describes the evenness with which fiber is spread across and interlocks within a sheet. Formation in book paper can be determined readily by backlighting a leaf and assessing the uniformity of fiber distribution. A patchy appearance could be described as cloudy or "wild." Cloudiness shows the paper to be less desirable and possibly sold at a discount due to its being of lower quality. Consistency of fiber dispersal and thickness influence the paper's opacity, which in turn shapes the perception of color. Formation flaws reveal the quality of paper and skill with which it was made; they also influence apparent color and provide information about a book's production cost. In the era of hand production, droplets of water sometimes fell onto a sheet during its formation, causing a round, thin spot called a "vat man's tear." This flaw occurred less frequently during machine production but, where apparent, tended to be found more frequently at the ends of a sheet rather than in the middle. Among other flaws, internal tears occasionally can be discerned. Assessing formation gives information about paper defects, such as pin holes, which are associated with sulfite pulp.[54]

[54] Dawe, *Paper and Its Uses*, 112; and "Paper Defects; Their Cause and Cure," in Witham, *Modern Pulp and Paper Making*, 501-507. The spelling "sulfite" rather than "sulphite" has been used in this dissertation.

Especially in American book paper produced during the 1830s through 1840s, shives, clusters of undigested fibers, appear within the fabric of sheets or as specks on the surface of paper, providing evidence of the imperfect materials used by many manufacturers. Shives can result from the underpreparation of many types of fibrous material. Analyzing the presence of shives presents more difficulties than identifying paper color, requiring substantial further analysis in a later chapter. The presence of shives can be telling of a substrate's processing history. Shives can be identified as straw or light-colored wood in a striking number of instances with the naked eye or low magnification. Less scrupulous attention to cleaning the fibers entering the beater in which the pulp stock materials were initially mixed together resulted in greater amounts of detritus in the finished paper. Intrusions, or matter enclosed within the sheet, often ruined the final product if removed. Printers shied away from purchasing paper with numerous intrusions. Hard or large internal detritus might damage printing type. During the early decades of mechanized paper manufacture, these flaws occurred especially on paper that appears to have been made on cylinder machines, testifying to the popularity of that design in the early years of mechanization in the American industry.

Visual analysis, despite producing findings more approximate than chemically-based tests, presents the most appropriate approach for the preliminary analysis of artifacts in need of conservation. Nondestructive examination can provide evidence of the pragmatic and innovative practices that characterized nineteenth-century papermaking and printing. The shift from rag to chemical wood papermaking, so readily acknowledged by historians, has disguised the incremental inventiveness of individual producers.

Conservation is the first step in writing the history of indecent books from a perspective apart from that of those whose prosecutions made it scarce.

At the same time, the shortage of surviving erotica makes the study of racy and obscene books of even greater interest to historians. Where books have been collected more for their intellectual content rather than material embellishments, condition, or association with prominent publishing houses, surviving artifacts may represent better the full range of technological practices employed in the book trades at the time of their publication. The visible non-rag content of many works published between 1840 and 1880 provides a link between fiber and textual content without requiring destruction.

Observation and simple physical analysis can reveal information about the many technological trajectories that characterized the American papermaking and print-related industries in the nineteenth century. Maintaining print artifacts for future study requires that more information be gathered about the factors affecting the longevity of artifacts. In turn, compiling information vital to the conservation of printed items can aid in preserving those physical objects. By revealing production practices that may affect the endurance of printed objects, bibliographical details gleaned from print objects can benefit both historical analysis and curatorial practice. These fields inherently strengthen one another: the study of technological practices enhances knowledge about the conservation of objects, and the maintenance of artifacts enables historians to uncover otherwise undocumented relationships between industrial practices and the diffusion of print. In fact and theory, the study of nineteenth-century indecent books rests upon paper. Papermaking and the technical developments in that industry are therefore the obvious starting point for the examination of erotica in that century.

Chapter Three

The Search for Fiber

The size and complexity of the Fourdrinier machine expresses a powerful technological sublime that subtly dominates the historiography of American papermaking. Immense and elegantly powerful, the machine has represented a near-heroic feat of engineering, allowing manufacturers to produce seemingly endless amounts of paper for nineteenth-century Americans. Yet images of that machine also represent the less optimistic side of technological progress, connecting those who consumed indecent books to the processes by which those materials were produced.

The machine's perpetually moving belt embodied sexualized power, mystery, and industrial oppression in Herman Melville's artful short story, "Tartarus of Maids."

> Something of awe now stole over me, as I gazed upon this inflexible iron animal. Always, more or less, machinery of this ponderous, elaborate sort strikes, in some moods, strange dread into the human heart, as some living, panting Behemoth might. But what made the thing I saw so specially terrible to me was the metallic necessity, the unbudging fatality which governed it. Though, here and there, I could not follow the thin, gauzy vail [sic] of pulp in the course of its more mysterious or entirely invisible advance, yet it was indubitable that, at those points where it eluded me, it still marched on in unvarying docility to the autocratic cunning of the machine. ….
>
> "Cupid here has led me a strange tour," said I to the dark-complexioned man before mentioned, whom I had ere this discovered not only to be an old bachelor, but also the principal proprietor. "Yours is a most wonderful factory. Your great machine is a miracle of inscrutable intricacy."[1]

Working alongside the sensuous, mechanical beast drew female workers into a soul-numbing livelihood, transforming the women into desexualized ghosts and monitors of their own industrial prostitution. Fed by vats of foamy pulp, the length of the machine's web of paper disappeared between pressing and drying cylinders only to re-

[1] Herman Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids," *Harpers' New Monthly Magazine* 10 (April 1855): 670-678, quote from 677-678.

emerge as warm, moist sheets in the hands of female workers assigned to checking its output. At the same time, Melville's portrayal of the machine depicted, though darkly, the persistent American faith in technological progress ordering social life. Indeed, the moving wire mesh upon which pulp drained and became formed can be seen as an emblem of the reliance of paper manufacturers upon supply and distribution networks, as well as the insatiable desire of consumers for paper. Machines, endless in their motion and complex in their operation, tied together Americans in ways that other identities did not, giving an aspect of grandness to the striving for sustenance and improvement that characterized nineteenth-century America.

Through artist's license, Melville populated the mill with female workers with pale faces that mirrored the blank sheets they perused, pressed, and finished. The men he identified as a visitor, manager, and mill guide, with the guide's name linking the story of the maids in America to that of the male fraternal club in London featured in an accompanying narrative, "The Paradise of Bachelors." That second story explored the excesses of a band of gentlemen who shared a luxurious dinner of wine and delicacies before taking leave of each other, "some going to their neighboring chambers to turn over the *Decameron* ere retiring for the night; some to smoke a cigar, promenading in the garden on the cool river-side; some to make for the street, call a hack, and be driven snugly to their distant lodgings." Through these images, Melville depicted the sporting life of well-to-do gentlemen resting on the dehumanization of female workers and the machines of industrialization that brought erotica into the homes of reading men.[2]

"Few citizens of industrializing America could maintain Melville's ironic sense of the machine as symbol and tool of its creators, owner, and operators," writes Judith

[2] Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors," 673.

McGaw, who identifies the dangers of determinism inherent in Melville's description of the machine. Published in a popular literary magazine in 1853, his story contains nuances that, at the time, failed to resonate with readers. The majority of mid-century Americans expressed enthusiasm about technological progress, even if criticism occasionally emerged about the apparent costs of industrialization.[3]

In a further irony weaving through Melville's story, he refers subtly to the Satanic mills of industrial England, allowing the mill guide to state the machine's cost in terms that could only denote an imported Fourdrinier. Cupid's comment on its price of $12,000 represented a sum at least twice that of a domestically-produced Fourdrinier and more than three times the price of a smaller, more flexible cylinder papermaking machine. The presence of a Fourdrinier heightened the effect of his story at the expense of contributing to the very determinism that he derided.[4]

The London bachelors who were "but hypocrites and rakes" may indeed have been tied to a culture pushed forward by the mechanical relentlessness of an imported Fourdrinier in America.[5] The United States in the mid-1850s stood alongside England as one of the greatest producers of paper in the world. Had the brotherhood been located in New York, it would have existed amidst the more varied production practices of American papermaking and printing, rather than merely following an English stereotype

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[3] McGaw traces the gradual mechanization of American papermaking in her book *Most Wonderful Machine: Mechanization and Social Change in Berkshire Paper Making, 1801-1885* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), see esp. 1-12 (quote from 4) and chapter four, "Mechanical Paper Makers: The Evolution of Paper Machinery, 1799-1885."

[4] The cost of procuring a Fourdrinier from the prominent Philadelphia firm of Nelson Gavit in 1857 ranged from $3,400 and $6,000, and that of a cylinder machine between $1,800 and $3,400, or somewhat more than half of the Fourdriner's cost. Edwin T. Freedley, *Philadelphia and Its Manufacturers: A Hand-Book Exhibiting the Development, Variety, and Statistics of the Manufacturing Industry of Philadelphia in 1857. Together with Sketches of Remarkable Manufactories; and a List of Articles Now Made in Philadelphia.* (Philadelphia: Edwin Young, 1858), 319. There is further paradox in the first publication of "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" in a widely distributed magazine produced upon an Adams power press rather than the cylinder printing press popularly associated with the industrialization of printing.

[5] Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors," 670.

of industrialization. In the United States, mechanization produced abundance, imbuing technological development with the ability to transform the tumultuous present into a more perfect future. Technology itself became a public celebration reifying national solidarity, sustaining a sense of continual revolution as the nation moved further away from its founding.[6]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century in America, handcraft workers produced durable rag papers in time-approved methods, enabling printers to turn out crisp letterform impressions on artifacts that would last centuries with moderate use and maintenance. By century's end, manufacturers produced serenely smooth ribbons of chemical wood paper wound from the dry end of a machine into crushingly heavy rolls of paper. Volume production required easily acquired fibers and faster preparation of stock, exchanging the social order of traditional craft labor and an assumption of long-lasting substrates with abundant, yet ephemeral, artifacts. More importantly, plentiful paper allowed resources to be drawn off to supply a trade in popular publications that drew Americans away from moral improvement, Bible reading, and practical knowledge. Indecent literature, in particular, threatened to overturn the nineteenth-century belief that technological progress would create an oasis of social and political advancement.[7]

Erotic publications offer evidence about incremental innovation and everyday work practices that have slipped from the historical record. A close study of American papermaking practices shows, however, that hope in technological solutions, as expressed

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[6] Technological determinism fits within the argument advanced by David Waldstreicher about the role of American festivals and almanacs in the revolutionary era as Anglo-inspired contributors to nationalism. See Waldstreicher, "Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism," *Journal of American History* 82, no. 1 (June 1995): 37-61.

[7] Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*, rev. ed. (1964; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). In this classic work, Marx explores literary examples of how industrialism absorbed and reproduced the pastoral ideal in antebellum America as part of an ideology of technological progress.

in continual innovations rather than in faith in technological progress, more accurately characterizes the industry's trajectory. Makers of paper with straw, wood, and cotton all proved to be boosters of their own interests, turning scarcity into an instrument for revealing the capacity of new resources that they controlled.

A single, marvelous machine more easily can be assimilated into the ideal of cultural progress, but less-than-idyllic technological practices can be related closely to the production of cultural goods that included illicit literature. Varied practices produced the materials that conveyed and recorded the lives of nineteenth-century Americans. They manufactured abundance, aiding in the construction of the "structure of feeling" that Raymond Williams has called culture. A variety of techniques made possible the growth of erotic print, which cannot be separated in its technological practices from the full range of American publishing.[8]

It has been much easier to trace the ways that the production of print culture rested in the technological capabilities that represented progress. Paper, in particular, has been lauded as a material yardstick by which a culture's vitality and ability to reproduce itself can be measured.

> If the question were put, "What single article has been of the greatest service to mankind?" mature reflection would, we think, decide upon paper as that article, since it has been the means by which thought and ideas have been diffused, not only among contemporaries, but preserved, and, as it were, accumulated in magazines for future expansion and growth. All other inventions, and perhaps the whole growth of civilization, are due to the material of paper.[9]

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[8] Raymond Williams, in *The Long Revolution* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1975), wrote that ideals, the ways that people live, and the record of social life are the three components of culture.

[9] *One Hundred Years' Progress of the United States: Giving, in a Historical Form, the Vast Improvements Made in Agriculture; Cultivation of Cotton and Sugar; Commerce; Travel and Transportation; Steam Engine; Manufacture of Cotton, Woolen, Silk, Paper, Fire-Arms, Cutlery, Hats, … etc., etc.; With a Large Amount of Statistical Information Showing the Comparative Progress of the Different States with Each Other, and This Country with Other Nations* (Hartford, Conn.: L. Stebbins, 1870), 291.

During the nineteenth century, complex processes on a large scale surpassed the comprehension of the ordinary person's experience, inspiring awe and uniting Americans through a belief in the possibilities of material advancement Alexander Hamilton's vision of the young nation's promising future rested on a faith in technological and economic innovation. That perspective did not die out after the heady years of the early republic; instead, it endured and flourished in the age of Jacksonian democracy and throughout the nineteenth century. Representing virtue in action, the passion for technological improvement secured advantages to individuals and tied together a nation. Andrew Jackson expressed the tenor of his era when he rhetorically asked, "What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns and prosperous farms, embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute?"[10]

Woven together with patriotism, such a sentiment worked to unite Americans even as the cultural forms of print began to splinter away from a core of religious and instructional reading materials. Fiction, sporting press literature, and erotica challenged social cohesiveness, while drawing readers into an imagined community of experience.[11] Illicit publications especially presented an obstacle to the idealization of industry.

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[10] David E. Nye, in *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1994) explores the concept of "technological sublime" (first coined by Perry Miller but traced by Nye to Leo Marx) across a range of natural phenomena and technological artifacts. Although not mentioned among his subjects, the Fourdrinier machine fits easily within his analysis of landscapes and complex technological productions. Jackson quote on 37.

[11] Benedict Anderson's formulation of a nation as "an imagined political community" explores the cultural origins of nationalism. Forming a sense of nationhood requires the invention of relationships among people who likely will never meet one another in person, setting boundaries to inclusion, asserting state power as the basis for freedom, and lasting relationships that bind individuals together as comrades. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* rev. ed. (1983; reprint, New York: Verso, 1991), esp. 5-7.

Americans increasingly devoured paper in all its forms during the nineteenth century, from cultural papers upon which books and newspapers were printed to paper collars, munitions cartridges, and boxboards. Papermakers struggled to reconcile their production levels and quality with market demand, building a fertile technological environment that sustained capital and material intensive processes. Publishers of illicit literature, as well as entrepreneurs marketing other forms of print, benefited from technological experimentation in American papermaking, although the incremental improvements supporting that high-volume industry have received insufficient attention by scholars. The process of claiming the benefits of technical developments often conflicted with social values, giving rise to regulatory efforts in many industries, according to Steven W. Usselman.[12]

Papermakers sought to qualify their reputations as manufacturers by reassuring purchasers and consumers that rags, which were commonly associated with permanence and quality, remained the material from which American machines made paper. By 1873, the historian of paper Carl Hofmann noted that for the previous half century the consumption of paper had swallowed up all available rags, making an expensive commodity out of the fiber that had been at the foundation of papermaking. Shortages encouraged manufacturers to produce cheaper papers using a range of alternatives, especially those available from domestic sources. Even as new fiber sources were found, rags retained a cultural significance distinguishing classes of papers, as well as those consumers who used certain types of paper.[13]

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[12] Steven W. Usselman, *Regulating Railroad Innovation: Business, Technology, and Politics in America, 1840-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 381-382.
[13] Carl Hofmann, *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Paper in All Its Branches* (Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1873), 10.

A German papermaker who had served for some years as a mill supervisor in the United States, Hofmann's perspective hinted at connections between the physical forms of print and social distinctions among the purposes to which they were put:

> Education, assisted by the printing press, is becoming more universal than ever before, and the constantly increasing demands of civilized humanity on the paper-mill can only be met by a corresponding production of pulp from new materials or substitutes. With the aid of science this is being done. The manufacture of straw, wood and esparto pulp has been so improved that the bulk of the news- and cheap book-papers is already made of these materials.
>
> The grades of paper for which rags will be used are thus gradually reduced in number; but the fact of their stricter exclusion from the large army of common papers, only confirms the opinions of those paper-makers who are often heard to exclaim, in utter contempt of straw, wood, and other substitutes:
>
> 'Rags are yet King!'[14]

Hofmann's contemporaries drew direct links between levels of paper consumption and advancing culture, forming an equation that placed Americans at the forefront of the progress of civilization.

Nineteenth-century historians of papermaking technology paid attention to the alternative practices that testified to the ingenuity of manufacturers in overcoming fiber shortages. Industrial instruction manuals offer exhaustive descriptions encompassing operations from the wet end (pulp) to dry end (finishing) of the papermaking process. Laced into the text containing rosters of chemicals, recipes for preparing pulp, and machine diagrams are details that associate substitute fiber sources with predominate and experimental uses in the nineteenth century.[15]

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[14] Hofmann, *Practical Treatise*, 217. The search for substitutes was strong even after the Civil War, Hofmann wrote, and "as late as 1870 anxiety and speculation over the scarcity of paper-fibre was at such a height that consideration was given to the possibility of producing pulp from animal as well as vegetable substances." Among the most exotic of trials was the attempt to make paper from deboned and descaled fish. The product failed to become popular.

[15] Dard Hunter's influential list of works on papermaking and watermarks expanded the number listed from 150 to 200 between first and second editions of *Papermaking: The History and Techniques of an Ancient Craft* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1943; and 2nd ed. 1947). This listing excludes particularly important references on mid-nineteenth century papermaking technologies, such as Hofmann, *Practical Treatise* and

Papermakers themselves plied their craft with a variety of fibers and processing techniques but rarely documented their deviation from methods known to assure high market prices for their final product. Evaluating the relationship of publishers of erotic publications to the technologies of American papermaking first requires an extensive re-analysis of technical developments in the industry. In the following chapters, it can be seen that technological experimentation, rather than a single, unassailable technological trajectory, characterized the manufacture of paper.

Knowing that myriad practices existed provides little focus for historians unaccustomed to examining print as technological artifacts. The history of papermaking has become the narrative of machines representing intensive capitalization and throughput. Technical achievements typically are collapsed into two realms: the refinement and enlargement of Fourdrinier machines mass producing cultural papers (primarily book papers and newsprint), and simplistic categories of rag and chemical wood papers (identified chiefly through presumed production dates and aging characteristics). A composite picture derived from examples of paper used for newspapers, illustrations, and book texts presents a more complex narrative, that separated the teleology of industrial progress from the multiple paths actually taken by American papermakers. Papermaking manuals employed by Americans during the

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Charles Thomas Davis, *The Manufacture of Paper: Being a Description of Various Processes for the Fabrication, Coloring, & Finishing of Every Kind of Paper; Including the Different Raw Materials and the Methods for Determining Their Values; the Tools, Machines, and Practical Details Connected with an Intelligent and a Profitable Prosecution of the Art, with Special Reference to the Best American Practice. To Which are Added a History of Paper, Complete Lists of Paper-Making Materials, Lists of American Machines, Tools, and Processes, Used in Treating the Raw Materials, and in Making, Coloring, and Finishing Paper* (Philadelphia: Baird & Co., 1886). Hunter bemoaned the lack of sufficient books in English, acknowledging Carl Hofmann's *Praktisches Handbuch der Papier-Fabrikation*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Verlag der Papier-Zeitung, 1891, 1897), reprinted during the 1920s. Hofmann's English-language treatise on American papermaking to this day has not been reprinted. Modern reprintings of Davis's book make that work readily available.

nineteenth century in fact reveal no simple trajectories; rather, they record an abundance of processes and exceptions across these generalities.[16]

The history of papermaking and of the production of paper before mechanized production and toward the end of the nineteenth century are well covered by a number of authors, with English and European developments woven generously into works that focus on American industry. Works dealing specifically with American developments in the nineteenth century typically record the formation of trade patterns, capitalization, and the transition from craft methods to mechanization, thereby reflecting the importance of the shift from smaller mills to consolidation in the industry at the end of the nineteenth century. The difficulty of unraveling historical information from later accounts and of wading through dense technical treatises has discouraged even robust bibliographers from exploring mid-nineteenth century shop practices. The maze of practices during that era laid the groundwork for the ability to respond to consumer demand, sustain intensive investment, and obtain volume production from domestic sources later in the century.[17]

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[16] Certain titles considered primary sources are, for instance, John H. Ainsworth, *Paper: The Fifth Wonder* (Kaukauna, Wis.: Thomas Publishing Co., 1958) and Frank O. Butler, *The Story of Paper-Making* (Chicago: J.W. Butler Paper Co., 1901).

[17] To the standard texts of Lyman H. Weeks, *A History of Paper-Manufacturing in the United States, 1690-1916* (New York: Lockwood Trade Journal Co., 1916); Dard Hunter, *Papermaking in Pioneer America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952) and *Papermaking: The History and Technique*; and David C. Smith, *History of Papermaking in the United States, 1691-1969* (New York: Lockwood Publishing Co., 1970) should be added Gary Bryan Magee, *Productivity and Performance in the Paper Industry: Labour, Capital, and Technology in Britain and America, 1860-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). John Bidwell's research into early American mechanization represents the only significant research encompassing technical issues from 1800 to 1850; however, his research span ends by 1840. See John Bidwell, "The Size of the Sheet in America: Paper-Moulds Manufactured by N. & D. Sellers of Philadelphia," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 87 (1977): 299-340 and "The study of paper as evidence, artefact, and commodity," in *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth-Century Bibliography*, ed. Peter Davison (1992; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1998), 69-82. Bidwell assisted in promoting the reprint of two early American industrial manuals by James Cutbush, *Early American Papermaking: Two Treatises on Manufacturing Techniques*, ed. John Bidwell (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1990). Among the most frequently cited works relevant to American papermaking are a number that report English and European practices and, as such, are relevant to learning about particularity in American and English techniques. See Timothy Barrett, "Early European Papers/Contemporary Conservation Papers," *Paper Conservator* 13 (1989): 1-108 and "Fifteenth-Century

The Fourdrinier had become a symbol of idealized papermaking rather than of actual practice by mid-century, despite the fact that its perfection and the dependence of the industry upon wood fibers to feed its massive production capacity did not occur until the 1870s. Only at that point did mills shift decisively to investment in Fourdriniers that required consistently high levels of pulp in order to pay for the intensive capitalization. Ensuring adequate supplies of a substrate suitable for mass production purposes was, in fact, a multifaceted process that required decades of experimentation.

In America, as in Europe, access to more paper widened the acceptable uses of print resources. The profusion of print brought together networks of producers and consumers in ways that engendered local action while embedding industrial practices within systems shaped by federal authority. The substrates of erotica publications provide

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Papermaking," *Printing History* 30 (1993): 33-41; André Blum, *On the Origin of Paper*, trans. H.M. Lydenberg (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1934); R.H. Clapperton, *Paper: An Historical Account of Its Making by Hand from the Earliest Times Down to the Present Day* (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1934, 1955), *Paper and Its Relationship to Books* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1934), *The Paper-Making Machine: Its Invention, Evolution, and Development* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1967), and with William Henderson, *Modern Paper-Making* (London: Waverly Book Co., 1929); C.F. Cross, E.J. Bevan, and Clayton Beadle, *Cellulose: An Outline of the Chemistry of the Structural Elements of Plants with Reference to Their Natural History and Industrial Uses* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1895); O. de Wit, "The Manufacture of Paper in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century," *International Paper History* 1.3 (1991), from the original published in Haarlem, Netherlands, by the Dutch Papermaking Association in 1990; Richard L. Hills, *Papermaking in Britain,1488-1988* (London: Athlone Press, 1988); Dard Hunter, "Papermaking" in *A History of the Printed Book*, ed. Lawrence C. Wroth (New York: Limited Editions Club, 1938); R.J. Lyall, "Materials: The Paper Revolution," in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain, 1375-1475*, ed. Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 11-29; Harry A. Maddox, *Paper Its History, Sources and Manufacture* (London: Sir I. Pitman & Sons, 1916); Paul Needham, "The Study of Paper from an Archival Point of View," *International Paper History Yearbook* 7 (1988): 122-135; Leonard B. Schlosser, "A History of Paper," in *Paper – Art & Technology*, Based on Presentations Given at the International Paper Conference Held in San Francisco, March 1978, eds. Paulette Long and Robert Levering, (San Francisco: World Print Council, 1979), 2-19; Alfred H. Shorter, *Paper Mills and Paper Makers in England, 1495-1800* (Hilversum, Holland: Paper Publications Society, 1957); *Papermaking: Art and Craft: An Account Derived From the Exhibition Presented in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., and Opened on April 21, 1968* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1968); A. Dykes Spicer, *The Paper Trade: A Descriptive and Historical Survey of the Paper Trade from the Commencement of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Methuen & Co., 1907); "A Survey of American Hand Papermakers," *Bookways* 9 (October 1993): 28-36; Edwin Sutermeister, *The Story of Papermaking* (Boston: S.D. Warren Co., 1954); and G.S. Witham, *Modern Pulp and Paper Making: A Practical Treatise* (New York: The Chemical Catalog Company, Inc., 1920). Dard Hunter's research usefully amends errors in Joel Munsell's *A Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1856).

examples of how urgent innovation characterized the American papermaking industry for much of the nineteenth century. Industrial experimentation by mills and workers reconciled material supplies with consumer demand.

The success of equipment manufacturers in providing machinery capable of significantly faster production made fiber supplies a bottleneck in the industry. Key American equipment designs derived largely from foreign patents. Government policies encouraged home industries vital to papermakers, favoring American equipment designers at the expense of foreign inventors. Relatively low duties on rags but tariffs on imported paper and chemicals benefited American manufacturers. Inventors sought to automate and speed up the papermaking process to meet consumer demand.

Strong market demand, recurring fiber shortages, and the heightened technical complexity of mechanized paper production encouraged creative shop practices as workers sought to produce the best quality output, despite widely varying conditions. In turn, publishers considered available paper supplies, as well as binding styles, printing quality, and textual content when developing marketing possibilities. A publisher's selection of a substrate deeply influenced the possibility that a publication could be marketed successfully.

Willingness to innovate and to creatively respond to shortages by turning to domestic sources laid the groundwork for the mass-production practices for which the United States became known in the 1880s. American papermakers pursued a variety of approaches with a range of machines, inspiring a dynamic blend of experimentation and commercial practices. The intersection of machine designs, chemical processes, and fiber sources engaged by American papermakers promoted an innovative and pragmatic

technological environment. That environment, rather than any inevitable technological advantage posed by chemical wood processes, allowed Americans to refine techniques for converting wood into paper fiber and to establish the nation as a world leader in papermaking for the next century.

Papermaking to 1801

Hand papermaking practices changed little from the middle of the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century in the West. Women sorted rags, removed buttons, opened seams, and cut the material into suitably sized pieces. In larger manufactories, they picked detritus from the finished sheets and with stones smoothed the surfaces of better papers. Men typically accomplished the remainder of the production tasks.

The process of papermaking began with a warmed tub of pulpy water stirred by workers or circulated by a paddle wheel in order to suspend the fibers. Papermakers sometimes added alum to the pulp in the beater to speed up the drying process and to enhance the hardening of the surface of the paper, or the "sizing" of the paper, to make it suitable for printing. Alum could also be added at the end of the process.[18] The vatman, standing at the tub, grasped a rectangular mold by its narrow sides, immersed the frame into the water, and lifted it out parallel with the ground. Maintaining a level mold while

[18] It is unclear which form of alum papermakers employed: either aluminum sulfate or potassium aluminum sulfate may have been added. Both precipitate rosin onto fibers, sealing the paper against excessive absorption of ink; likewise, both may decompose and release free sulfuric acid. See Frazer G. Poole's foreword to W.J. Barrow, *Manuscripts and Documents: Their Deterioration and Restoration*, 2nd ed. (1955; University Press of Virginia, 1976), xiii-xiv. The foreword is reprinted from Allen Kent and Harold Lancour, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1969) 257-270. For further technical background, see Irene Brűckle, "The Role of Alum in Historical Papermaking," *Abbey Newsletter* 17, no. 4 (Sept. 1993): 53-57. A mordant for fixing dyes to textiles and siccative valuable in tanning leather, alum was not produced in the United States until 1814. Within two years of that date, alum had gained tariff protection, which increased through 1824. The tariff greatly boosted domestic production. William Haynes, *American Chemical Industry: Background and Beginnings,* Vol. 1*, 1609-1911* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1954), 191.

shaking it side-to-side and front-to-back evenly distributed and interlocked the fibers, leaving a smooth sheet as the water drained back into the tub. The vatman removed the deckle, or the outer frame of the mold, to expose the wet sheet for the next step, "couching."

The vatman passed his work to a coucher, who placed the deckle on another mold, and continued working. The coucher continued the process of drainage by placing the mold on an incline and then waited for sufficient solidification before flipping the wet sheet onto a felt. Alternating sheets and felt until 144 molds had been successfully stacked to produce a post of paper, the coucher took the completed pile to a standing press, where even more water could be forced out.[19]

Workers from the shop joined to turn the screw press, which reduced the pile to a tenth of its weight as water drained from the stack. With the fibers compacted under the press, a layman then separated the moist but solidified sheets from the felts. As the coucher continued his tasks with the felts, the layman placed the paper in a single stack for further pressing. By rearranging the sheets slightly between continued compressions, the layman smoothed the sheets and extracted as much water as possible. The layman removed the sheets four or five at a time from the pile, took paper to a loft, and hung the sheets over ropes for drying.[20]

Once dry, workers dipped the sheets in a gelatin bath prepared from boiled animal hides. This sizing reduced the permeability of the paper, allowing ink to lie crisply on the surface rather than diffusing fuzzily into the substrate. More pressing removed excess size. Drying and burnishing between wooden glazing-rolls sealed the surface of the

[19] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 170-179.
[20] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 183-188.

paper, completing the manufacturing process.[21] In one day's work, a vatman, coucher, and layman could produce about twenty posts, or quires, containing 144 sheets each.

Early American papermakers preferred to dry sheets on rounded wooden poles rather than ropes, and the laymen put little effort into creating a smooth finish to the sheets. Otherwise, domestic practices differed little from those of England, France, and Germany during the same period. In contrast to their European counterparts, American papermakers mechanized their facilities only reluctantly, eventually replacing wooded finishing cylinders with metal components and more slowly assimilating Hollander beaters. Virtually all handmade sheets in America through 1800 featured a laid finish. Thin parallel wires, supported by thicker transverse chains, created shadowy grids on the finished paper. As in Europe, American papermakers sometimes distinguished their wares by sewing additional wires onto the mold, thereby creating watermarks.

As early as 1795, Isaiah Thomas mimicked European papermakers by producing a wove finish with a fine mesh rather than the usual laid pattern. By the 1820s, wove paper dominated American paper production, and most of that output was manufactured by machine rather than by hand. The endless wire belts of a papermaking machine lacked sturdy chains onto which decorative patterns could be stitched, making it impossible to create an actual watermark. Only with the employment, in the coming decades, of an additional roll to press designs into sheets after their formation on the belt could a shadow mimicking a watermark be created.[22]

Manual papermaking took a physical toll on workers. Leaning over a vat and dipping molds into warm pulp distinguished couchers and vatmen with hunched backs

[21] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 194-199.
[22] Thomas L. Gravell and George Miller, *American Watermarks 1690-1835*, 2nd ed. rev. and expanded (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2002), xv.

and red forearms, in addition to requiring great arm and upper body strength. Papermakers generally received higher pay than other laborers due to the skills required of them, and American laborers, like those of Europe, were known not only for their ability to withstand the rigorous work of the mill, but also for their love of drink.[23]

The industry required resilient fibers as well as workers, and the transition from craft production to machine manufacture challenged papermakers especially in solving the problem of acquiring sufficient fibers. Although much attention has been paid to the use of cotton rags for papermaking in industrialized Western countries, until several decades into the nineteenth century papermakers concerned with durability, flexibility, and strength preferred linen whenever possible. With adequate preparation, flax and hemp also could be worked into a durable, white substrate.

From the mid-1600s, English colonial authorities instituted requirements and offered rewards for the production of flax in America. By the early eighteenth century, bounties for hemp offered rewards to producers.[24] Domestic clothing manufacture relied upon American flax crops for the manufacture of clothing suitable for wearing during multiple seasons, especially in the middle colonies and New England.

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[23]Hunter, *Papermaking,* 241-246. An avid collector of paper and papermaking artifacts from around the world, Dard Hunter also thoroughly understood the interrelatedness of typefounding, papermaking, and printing. *Papermaking* remains the most often quoted work in Western papermaking history, and Hunter is a veritable icon among papermakers and for most historians in the field. Comprehensive as his research in hand papermaking has proven to be, he paid little attention to everyday commercial practices, emphasizing instead the role of craftsmen making paper by hand and, at the other extreme, advanced technical processes. Hunter's lack of attention to ordinary papermaking, especially the use of alternative fibers alongside cotton and linen, has been corrected only sporadically by studies of individual papermakers. See McGaw, *Most Wonderful Machine* for the best example of engaged historical research incorporating insights from Hunter without the romantic overtones typically present in accounts of the industry's history. Hunter's vast collection of ancient paper included some of the oldest samples in existence and is now housed at the Museum of American Papermaking in the Institute of Paper Science Technology at Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia.

[24] Rolla Milton Tryon, *Household Manufactures in the United States, 1640-1860* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1966).

Pulled from the ground by hand, flax might be dried before being "retted," or rotted so that fibers could be separated from the wood stem core. Early American growers laid flax on the ground and rotated the stems occasionally, which allowed dew and soil to introduce bacteria and fungi into the harvested plants. Sufficiently decomposing the stems could take from a fortnight to as long as three months, depending on weather conditions and the characteristics of the flax. Flax of the best quality could be retted within two or three weeks through submersion in slow-moving water, such as a pond or stream, but only at relatively greater cost. Once bonding agents within the plant had been weakened, workers once again dried the stems, beat them to break apart the woody inner pith, and then scotched the material, which entailed buffing and cleaning the stalks to complete the separation of fiber from pitch.[25]

The relatively stiff flax fibers could be woven into clothing appropriate for most seasons. Durable, long-lasting, and attractive, linen remained the standard American household fabric for towels and tablecloths long into the nineteenth century.[26] Hemp offered a longer, but less refined and less resilient, fiber that found its way more frequently into industrial use than everyday clothing. Hemp might be woven into clothing, albeit a coarse variety. The cheap and durable fiber gained most prominence in the naval stores industry, supplying fiber for cordage and sails. The increasing use of cotton for home textiles before and after the Revolutionary War exacerbated the division of flax and hemp into consumer and industrial fibers.

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[25] R.H. Kirby, *Vegetable Fibres: Botany, Cultivation, and Utilization* (New York: Interscience Publishers, Inc., 1963), 19-27 and 35-36.
[26] Mary Schoeser and Celia Rufey, *English and American Textiles from 1790 to the Present* (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1989), 15.

Long before it became an American staple, hemp came to be so closely associated with the production of durable textiles that its genus, *Cannabis,* provided the etymological origin for the word "canvas." Cut from the field with a knife when ready for harvest, hemp was dried and decomposed in much the same manner as flax. Within a fortnight or up to two-and-a-half months, dew retting dissolved the matter bonding fibers to each other and to the pith. Drying, breaking, or "scutching" completed preparation.[27]

Although less flexible than linen or cotton fibers, hemp served as one alternative fiber during rag shortages, particularly after the financial panic of 1837. Bleached to whiteness, it mixed easily with longer cotton rag fibers. Well formed rag pulp with bleached hemp added to the furnish is rarely distinguishable except through chemical or microscopic analysis. Hemp has received regular but slight attention in papermaking trade literature as a rag alternative during economic crises.

Despite the advantage of a higher cellulose content than either hemp or linen, cotton was not the exclusive choice of fiber. Historian Edwin Sutermeister noted that papermakers considered hemp's ability to be beaten into a fine fiber to match or exceed that of linen. Although desirable for its long fibers that intertwined for maximum strength and bulking within sheets of paper, cotton presented difficulties in processing as a raw material. The fibers of cotton, like those of linen and hemp, took so much refining that they were too expensive to use in papermaking until they entered the secondary market and could be recovered as recycled goods.

Until the era of industrial textiles, linen and hemp – which contained eighty percent cellulose to cotton's ninety percent content – proved almost as desirable for

[27] Kirby, *Vegetable Fibres*, 52-57 and 60-61. Hemp should not be confused with Manila hemp, a papermaking fiber used for wrapping paper in the nineteenth century and produced from banana leaves. That fiber has become known as abaca.

papermaking. Cotton proved more amenable to mechanized production than flax, increasing the availability of cotton rags much more so than linen as the American textile industry prospered. The high level of performance of cotton rags in producing quality paper also drew the attention of papermakers. Despite the advantages accruing to manufacturers who used hemp, cotton and linen rags provided most of the fiber for American papermaking until the mid-nineteenth century.[28]

Mechanization slowly changed the approach of mills to the process of making paper. European papermakers engaged water power for macerating rags with rows of stamping hammers until the late seventeenth century, when a Dutch inventor devised a way to reduce rags to fibers in a tub into which turning wooden cylinder into which knives had been set. The advent of the Hollander, as that machinery became known, significantly increased the pace and efficiency of the papermaking process. The churning knives cut the disintegrating fabric, pulverizing it eight times faster than stamping mills. The harsher process produced a shorter fiber than the hammering and resulted in a weaker end product. Hammering drew out fibers to their full length and produced exceptionally resilient paper, but the Hollander's greater speed facilitated volume production. Powered by wind or water, the Hollander minimized the arduous task of macerating pulp into usable fibers.

Despite the efficacy of the Hollander, the stamping machine was used concurrently in Western countries well into the 1700s. Stamping machines became exceptional by 1750 except in France. Even though capitalization with new technologies in Colonial American paper mills lagged behind that of Europe, by the American

[28] Edwin Sutermeister, *The Story of Papermaking* (1954; reprint, New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1962), 21 and 24.

Revolution colonists began investing in Hollanders. By 1775, Abijah Burbank's Massachusetts paper mill operated two of the machines, with one Hollander and two vats replacing ten hand vats.[29]

Introduction of the Hollander beater coincided with a shift among European papermakers toward use of cotton as a preferred fiber. The machine stimulated pulp production, possibly breaking down cotton fibers more easily than did stamping machines, according to Allan Stevenson.[30] Colonial American industry lagged behind that of Europe, delaying the introduction of large-scale beaters until the following century and volume textile manufacturing until the 1830s and 1840s.

During the period in which cotton and linen rags predominated as fiber sources, women sorted and dusted rags before machine processing began. Female laborers stripped fabric of buttons and cut the material into pieces about 2" x 4". In addition to their tasks at the dry end of the process, women comprised about half of the workforce of a typical mill, although census records frequently only record the number of male workers within the industry. In between women's preparation of rags and final inspection of goods, men controlled the chemical and mechanical processing. They added a caustic soda solution, such as slaked lime and soda ash, to open kettles filled with rags and cooked the mixture. Toward mid-century, steam came to be applied to aid in breaking down the rags. After cooking, laborers emptied the kettle onto the floor to remove excess water while allowing the rags to decompose more over time.

After being seasoned in this fashion, rags were transferred to a breaking engine, which washed away dirt and detritus while agitating the decomposed rags until they were

[29] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 58; and Hunter, *Papermaking*, 150-169, esp. 162-163.
[30] Allan H. Stevenson, "Briquet and the Future of Paper Studies," in *Monumenta Chartae Papyraceae Historiam Illustrantia*, Vol. 4, *Briquet's Opuscula* (Hilversum, Holland: Paper Publications Society, 1955).

torn into fragments and, finally, individual fibers. Bleaching, rinsing, and another draining finished the cleaning process, producing a pulp called half stuff. A final run through the beaters completed the conditioning of the pulp, evening out the fiber preparation and hydration of cellulose to give the correct body to the furnish.[31]

Wool was unusable for paper production, so manufacturers encouraged household collection of linen and cotton discards. Clothing proved to be a more precious commodity in colonial America than even in Europe, which reduced the availability of articles for recycling into paper.[32] Americans wore out their clothing before turning it over to rag collectors, who served as intermediaries between households and central mills. Excessively dirty and thin fabrics produced off-white, limp paper. Located by necessity near waterpower, paper mills remained tied to urban centers, where the industry's chief raw material might be procured. The spread of railroads in the 1830s and 1840s allowed mills, centered in the East and particularly in Massachusetts, to extend the area in which rags might be collected. At the same time, however, a growing number of mills appeared farther west, reducing the raw materials that traditional papermaking areas such as Philadelphia could glean from hinterlands.[33] Released from the vagaries of local markets and able to seek sources from a broader swath of the country, papermakers began taking advantage of locations near large rivers to power their production system machinery.[34]

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[31] Sutermeister, *Story of Papermaking*, 21-24.
[32] Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufactures in the United States*, Vol. 1, *1607-1860* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1929), 289.
[33] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 192.
[34] In addition to the additional power gained by locating along larger bodies of water, the advantage of clearer water to papermaking might be a subject for further study. Water is the "forgotten factor" in papermaking, according to R.G. Macdonald in *Industrial Water for Pulp, Paper and Paperboard Manufacture*, TAPPI Monograph Series, No. 1 (New York: Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry, 1942). A range of local factors, including hardness, impurities, alkalinity, and mineralization of the available water supply, affected the quality of paper that a mill produced. See N.S. Chamberlin, et al., *Water Technology in the Pulp and Paper Industry*, TAPPI Monograph Series, No. 18 (New York:

Rags from abroad, chiefly from Germany and Italy, contained significantly more linen than the remnants gathered from Americans. Imported items added durability and strength to the finished paper. Congress recognized the importance of supporting local manufacturing by encouraging rag imports through legislation passed in 1804 that dropped the duty imposed on rag imports in 1789.[35] After 1804, Congress continued the initial tariff trend of encouraging domestic industries by lowering the cost of imported raw materials.[36] The volume of imported rags increased from next to nothing before 1800 to a small but noticeable amount as the second decade of the century began.

From the 1810s to the 1850s, the overall value of rag imports increased more than ten fold. Despite occasional downturns, the cost of imports rose from less than $100,000 in 1818 to more than $1,000,000 in 1854.[37] Tariffs in 1824 and 1828 guarded manufacturing interests but left imported rags untaxed. With staunchly protectionist duties in force through 1832, the introduction of the key raw material for papermaking increased through the mid-1830s. The value of imports dropped after the Panic of 1837 but during the 1840s imports unevenly but gradually climbed. American manufacturers continued to seek foreign sources to supplement high quality domestic supplies.

A short but severe downturn among total imports commenced in 1842. Rather than reflecting the limited duty placed upon rags, the decline resulted from a procedural

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Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry, 1957). What these treatises fail to discuss, however, is the effect of the history of papermaking on practices and policies for water use and community development. Morton J. Horwitz's classic work of legal scholarship, *The Transformation of American Law, 1780-1860* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977) explores how riparian rights came to be interpreted through the concept of "instrumentalism" rather than a protection of rights that emphasized conservation rather than economic use. See also Lawrence Friedman's *A History of American Law* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973). The environmental history of papermaking is yet to be written.

[35] Clark, *History of Manufactures*, 288.

[36] Clark, *History of Manufactures*, 287-288.

[37] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing,* 219-220. During this period, the general cost of imports declined. The volume of rags imported was not recorded until the early 1840s.

change in the administration of tariff collection. The new policy required that fees be paid in cash at the time of importation rather than the previous practice of allowing importers to delay payment duties until goods were sold to a third party. Although a warehousing scheme eventually resolved the cash flow difficulty for merchants, all imports for the year 1842 plummeted upon implementation of the policy.[38]

Rag or scrap textile supplies depended on factors external to the industry, such as the dying practices of textile manufacturers or economic conditions that discouraged consumers from discarding old garments or cloths. The success of the textile industry in using vat colors to dye materials to higher standards of fastness made it harder for the paper industry to recover rags. The production of higher quality clothing made fewer rags useful for reprocessing; permanent dyes forced papermakers to intensify bleaching processes in order to produce the preferred white paper.

Chemistry

Chemicals played an increasingly important role in pulp preparation. In their choice of chemicals for processing rags into fibers, Americans relied upon potash, a domestically-produced alkaline agent. Until mid-century, papermakers generally added potash, rather than caustic soda, for alkaline processing. Easily produced from the waste remaining after clearing forests or from fireplace ashes, potash earned higher favor among Americans than more advanced and expensive industrial alkalis.[39]

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[38] John Dean Goss, *The History of Tariff Administration In the United States: From Colonial Times to the McKinley Administration Bill*, 2nd ed., *Studies in History, Economic and Public Law* 1, no. 2 (New York: Columbia University, 1897), 46 and 54. Originally passed on March 2, 1833, during the nullification controversy, the policy became effective June 30, 1842.

[39] Haynes, *American Chemical Industry*, 27. Three related alkalis, in order of increasing strength, were household lye, caustic potash, and caustic soda.

Leached from the ashes of burned wood, boiled until dry, and then heated to redness to reduce impurities, the substance was a key component for core American products such as soap, glass, and fertilizer.[40] Frontiersmen produced potash, which could be exported during colonial times for much needed cash. The trade peaked with the end of the embargo in 1809, but exports began to decline after the War of 1812 as Britain turned to Scottish sources and then to its own emerging soda ash industry. Americans continued to consume their own home-produced stores for a variety of industries, but by the late 1820s Europeans favored soda ash derived from LeBlanc's salt method.[41] Both potash and soda ash could be made caustic by treating them with lime, which produced effective corrosive chemicals.

LeBlanc's process combined sulfuric acid with salt to form hydrochloric acid and sodium sulphate. He found that treating the latter substance with chalk and charcoal resulted in sodium carbonate and a waste product, calcium sulphide. His findings from the 1780s made a critical improvement to techniques for producing three major chemical forms that dominated early nineteenth-century manufacturing needs: acid, bleach, and alkali.[42] By 1793, Americans produced sulfuric acid, and the chemical became a mainstay of the nation's budding chemical industry. Yet the ready availability of vegetable potash diminished the urgency for making soda products from salt.[43]

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[40] One measure of the importance of potash to the economy of America during the eighteenth century can be seen in the granting on July 31, 1790, of the first United States patent to Samuel Hopkins for an improved method of producing potash (Washington, D.C.: United States Patent and Trademark Office).
[41] Haynes, *American Chemical Industry,* 27 and 160-161. The notoriously inconsistent purity of domestic potash, the increasing use of LeBlanc's process, and, most importantly, the discovery of significant deposits of potassium salts in Prussia in 1861 effectively signaled the end of the era of small-scale potash commodity production in the United States. Nevertheless, small manufactories in the heartland continued to produce potash into the 1880s, their operations shielded by the prohibitive transportation costs associated with imported soda ash (160-162).
[42] F. Sherwood Taylor, *A History of Industrial Chemistry* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, [1957]).
[43] Haynes, *American Chemical History*, 178 (for date only).

Bleaching textiles rather than preparing pulp drove the application of acid to papermaking. The paper industry in Holland specialized in the time-consuming process of boiling linens in lye, laying them out on grasses for extended sunning, and souring them with buttermilk to complete whitening before the introduction of bleach. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, Europeans employed weak sulfuric acid instead of traditional whitening processes. English papermakers, especially dependent on Dutch processing of their rags, quickly assimilated chemical bleaching techniques. By the close of the century, chlorine gas also could be obtained.

Dissolving chlorine in alkaline solutions increased the safety of the bleaching processes. Despite the availability of chlorine-based techniques, American papermakers appear to have delayed implementing the new method possibly until as late as 1830 due to the added cost of the process. The secrecy with which papermaking tradesmen treated their labor customs makes it possible that bleaching began without fanfare years before that date. Americans imported bleaching salts until 1824. After about 1830, techniques from the textile industry expanded the range of rags that could be made into pulp. Scraps from the emerging textiles sector offered an important new source for fiber, and bleaching allowed dyed remainders to gain secondary application in the paper industry.[44]

The reluctance of manufacturers to switch from vegetable potash to industrial production of soda and to employ chemical bleaching characterized the fledgling American chemical industry. Historian William Haynes opined that "the tardy introduction of this group of chemicals into the United States furnishes a clear-cut distinction between the evolution of chemical manufacturing here and in Great Britain." Although by 1829 Americans reportedly produced almost 200,000 pounds of bleaching

[44] Haynes, *American Chemical Industry*, 140.

powder, the domestic alkali industry established a foothold only in 1850. Imported alkalis and home-produced potash fulfilled industrial needs until years after the Civil War.[45]

The introduction of papermaking machines in the early nineteenth century changed the face of the industry by 1850. Requiring a greater capital outlay and generating volume output to meet ever-rising demand, mechanized production presented powerful cost efficiencies and shifted the industry's main concern to fiber acquisition rather than the retention of skilled laborers. Mid-twentieth century collector and historian of paper Dard Hunter noted sadly noted the demise of commercial hand papermaking:

> Nothing remains today of the old handmade-paper industry in America, since here, though not in the Old World, the advent of the papermaking machine soon swept aside the ancient, tedious method of forming each sheet of paper separately. Just at the close of the Civil War all papermaking by hand had ceased on the North American continent.[46]

By the 1880s, expensive, volume-producing Fourdrinier machines dominated American papermaking. Until the 1870s, however, the competing and less complicated cylinder machine satisfied many industrial purposes. Neither the modernization of fiber sources nor mechanization followed a single, certain path.

Papermaking Machines

During the eighteenth century, the Hollander beater supported and encouraged demand for print; during the nineteenth century, the Fourdrinier machine did that and more. Alongside the Fourdrinier, cylinder machines served a loyal market that required flexible production capabilities along with higher output. In England, Fourdriniers achieved prominence during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, but

[45] Haynes, *American Chemical Industry*, 192-193.
[46] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 246-247. In the decades after publication of Hunter's book, a hand papermaking revival began in Europe and America, supplying paper for artists rather than for commercial printing.

Americans were characteristically reticent to invest in the large capital outlay necessary for purchasing imported machines. Only with the growth of a market of demand to sustain volume production and the slow refinement of the design did American manufacturers in larger numbers commit themselves to the massive capital expenditures required for Fourdrinier operations.

The Napoleonic era saw hand papermakers on the Continent and in England seeking to meet ever more brisk demand for printed news about current events. Press manufacturers and papermakers struggled to keep up with the market requirements, with Koenig's cylinder press and the Fourdrinier papermaking machine embodying two major achievements in the drive to design high-volume equipment to meet the bourgeoning demand for information.[47]

Robert Louis, an employee in the papermaking firm of Leger Didot, produced designs in 1799 for a machine to distribute pulp to a moving wire screen that also allowed water to drain away and be pressed out of the traveling paper. With a grant from French authorities, he further developed the complicated design and patented the process. Didot procured the design from Louis, upon the promise of future payments, and sold the English rights to Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier.

In England, Didot joined with John Gamble, an English ex-patriate who accompanied him from Paris on the trip, and English native Bryan Donkin, soon to gain fame as an inventor-engineer. Together they constructed a working model in 1803, taking advantage of the fine tooling and mechanic skills available in England. Within three years, they had so improved the design that a staff of nine and a single machine could

[47] Allen R. Pred's work is the starting point for historians studying the importance of news to commerce in American history. See *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information: The United States System of Cities, 1790-1840* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973).

produce the amount of paper that forty-one people and seven vats were necessary to manufacture by hand, at less than one-third the cost. Their continued efforts resulted in double that capacity by the mid-1810s.

Despite having paid tens of thousands of pounds toward the development of the design, the Fourdriniers realized no profits from their investment. The owners of papermaking firms were eager to break the power of craft workers over the labor process. Knowledge about imminent expiration of the patent and financial disputes involving the firm discouraged papermakers from committing to the royalties for the machine.[48]

Perfecting the highly engineered machine took a financial toll on the Fourdrinier firm, which already was stressed by the mismanagement of funds. John Dickinson's simpler model for a cylinder machine competed with that of the Fourdriniers during the early part of the nineteenth century.[49] With the latter design soon to enter the public domain and sales for their equipment unsure, the Fourdrinier firm explored ways to ensure a profitable market in the time remaining for its patent. According to historian of paper John Bidwell, the financially-troubled Fourdrinier firm arranged with Dickinson not to compete head-to-head in their mutual home market. Apparently with incentives from the Fourdriniers, Dickinson promoted his cylinder design less heavily to English papermakers, leaving portions of the nation's domestic market for the more expensive Fourdrinier to be sold. Dickinson himself intended to turn to the American market as an outlet for his own invention.[50]

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[48] W.W. Pasko, ed., *American Dictionary of Printing and Bookmaking: Containing a History of These Arts in Europe and America, with Definitions of Technical Terms and Biographical Sketches*, intro. by Robert E. Runser (1894; reprint, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1967), 208.
[49] Joan Evans, *The Endless Web: John Dickinson & Co. Ltd. 1804-1954* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955) gives the complete history of Dickinson's invention; see 10-11 for a comparison to Gilpin's machine.
[50] John Bidwell, "Industrial Hubris: A Revisionist History of the Papermaking Machine," an unpublished paper presented July 7, 2003, at Rare Book School, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Dickinson's cylinder design was less intricate than the design of the Fourdrinier and, therefore, a better match for the lack of skilled mechanics in the United States. Although smaller and slower than Fourdriniers, cylinder models proved quite adequate for smaller paper manufactories and, indeed, quite popular. Until after the Civil War, paper manufacturers favored the latter.

Dickinson's machine spawned imitators. Lawrence Greatacre, who made paper for Joshua and Thomas Gilpin in America, met with John Dickinson in England and convinced the inventor to allow a sketch to be made of his machine. Using British patent records and Greatacre's drawings, Thomas Gilpin was able to fashion his own version of a cylinder machine. Gilpin received an American patent in December of 1816 and offered his machine for sale the following February. In 1817, Gilpin was already producing paper on the Brandywine River in his own mill.[51]

Instead of pouring pulp down onto a flat, moving screen, the Dickinson and Gilpin designs featured a cylinder rotating within a vat of stuff. Suction from inside the cylinder forced fibers to adhere to the wire fabric facing on the outside of the unit. The cylinder's rotation transferred the newly-formed sheet to a wire belt for draining, pressing, and flattening. A key difference in the paper produced on the Fourdrinier and that produced on cylinder machines lay in the formation of sheets on the web.

The Fourdrinier fully imitated the forward-backward and side-to-side shaking motion of a vatman distributing fibers evenly through elaborate shaking of the mold. The moving cylinder screen shook fibers only forward and backward along the moving wire,

[51] Clapperton, *Paper-Making Machine*, 345. Historians dispute how much Gilpin copied from Dickinson. Gilpin's patent was lost in a fire at the United States Patent Office in 1836, making it difficult to determine the exact similarity of designs. The competing 1822 design of J. Ames of Springfield, Mass., also was destroyed.

which created a noticeable grain in the paper. Fibers aligned to a great degree rather than becoming completely interlocked, so the paper could be torn more easily in the direction of the grain than in any other angle. Another problem lay in the tendency of extraneous materials in the pulp to become buried within the formed sheet. Tiny bits of bark, straw, leaves, or other detritus that inevitably found a way into the pulp became embedded, resulting in bulges of debris that could not be removed without ruining the paper.[52]

In 1822, J. Ames of Massachusetts patented improvements on the cylinder design, stimulating widespread interest in that type of machine among Americans. It took seven more years before Isaac Saunderson completely resolved both defects in 1829, however. His design featured a horizontal whirl wheel that countered the tendency of pulp to flow along the length of the sheet-forming cylinder as it revolved into the vat to pick up stuff. The wheel scattered fibers during the moment they were sucked against the cylinder, thus reducing the grain. The inventor claimed that by disrupting the current, the device encouraged motes and other undesirable debris to separate from the flow of pulp and to land on the outside of the sheet, where they could be picked off.[53]

Another improvement enlarged the range of the types of papers that could be produced on a machine. Adding a variable circumference roller that pressed against the newly-formed sheet permitted a variety of paper thicknesses to be produced. The sheet-forming roller made it possible for a single machine to manufacture styles ranging from printing paper to heavy pasteboard for boxes.[54]

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[52] Robert Henderson Clapperton and William Henderson, *Modern Paper-Making*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, [1947]) offers detailed information about these difficulties.
[53] Malcom Keir, *Manufacturing Industries in America: Fundamental Economic Factors* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1920), 251.
[54] "Cylinder Paper Machine," *Niles' Weekly Register* (Dec. 5, 1829): 236. Contemporaries also spelled Saunderson's name as Sanderson, although his patent bore the former spelling.

When adoption of equipment no longer depended on local supplies or markets, machinery became a driving force in paper production.[55] Pushed by heightened demand primarily for news and book paper, papermakers expanded existing ventures and constructed new mills, making the 1830s a turning point for mill capitalization. Mechanization proved costly. Before that decade, an economical but competitive mill could be constructed for no more than $10,000; soon afterwards, costs began escalating, and viable enterprises required from two to four times that sum.[56]

In 1827, Henry Barclay imported the first Fourdrinier for a Saugerties, New York, paper mill. Imported machines such as that of Barclay's were reported to have cost as much as $30,000. Domestic manufacture of a similar design by the late 1820s reduced costs significantly, which gave papermaker Henry Hudson the opportunity to procure a Fourdrinier-inspired machine for just $2,000 in 1831. Americans hastened to make their own claims on papermaking processes. The number of American patents for papermaking mechanisms rose from just four before 1800 to eighty-eight between 1800 and 1839. As the presence of papermaking machines grew, papermakers found themselves embedded in a technological system that intensified other processes. In the space of a year, Hudson spent a total of $4339.90 for the Fourdrinier, a drying machine, a cutting machine, wires and felts, and sundries for its operation.[57]

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[55] Of the new structures built in search of increased waterpower can be counted the gargantuan Holyoke mill, powered by a dam constructed on the Connecticut River. The Parsons Paper Company moved its operation in 1853 to the location, with other firms following soon after. Keir, *Manufacturing Industries in America,* 251-253. It should be noted that the growth in patenting continued, with 1063 patents approved between 1839 and 1884. The Jordan engine further beat pulp midway through the digestion process, refined fibers, and aided in the evening out of stock quality across batches. Invented in the mid-1850s, the engine proved remarkably long lasting, requiring only periodical exchange of its knives for continued performance. See Clapperton, *Paper-Making Machine*, 350.

[56] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 193.

[57] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 356-360.

Although both cylinder and Fourdrinier machines lasted for decades with proper maintenance, those of the cylinder design were more easily built and repaired. Cheaper than Fourdriniers since the early part of the nineteenth century and throughout the remainder of the century, they also were more adaptable. Cylinder designs offered variable speed and greater flexibility in the type of paper produced, which allowed papermakers control over selecting ancillary equipment as needed or complete systems for continuous production.[58] Rather than relying solely on volume and speed as the chief factors that offset mill capitalization, a greater variety of factors came into play when selecting the production system in place around the cylinder machine. Available fibers, niche markets, the knowledge base of local laborers, and increasing demand for low-quality paper also became important considerations when planning the investment required by a papermaking production system.

The capability of the cylinder to resolve some of the problems of machine-made paper, such as graining, intrusion flaws, and variable paper thickness, made cylinder machines more flexible, as well as more inexpensive and simpler than Fourdriniers. With demand for paper of all types bourgeoning, the use of cylinder machines can be contrasted with its competitor, which began to be marketed specifically for large-scale production. Papermakers used the two for overlapping purposes, roughly analogous to the competition between the slower, flexible, yet more precise Adams power press and R. Hoe & Co.'s high-volume cylinder presses. By mid-century, both styles of papermaking machines and presses co-existed easily within American industry.

[58] The American firm of Phelps & Spafford constructed the first papermaking system in 1830, incorporating a cylinder press within a constellation of equipment that accepted pulp and produced cut sheets in a single machine process. The more complicated Fourdrinier could not yet be seamlessly joined to complementary components. Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 188.

Through most of the century, mills in the United States employed a greater number of cylinders than Fourdriniers. American establishments tended to be smaller and less heavily capitalized than those in Britain, which employed predominantly Fourdriniers. Lower capitalization allowed American papermakers to pursue more varied manufacturing techniques. "The *cylinder* machine, more simple and less costly than the other, is in more general use; but the paper made on it is not equal in quality. Nothwithstanding, it does very well for news, and the various purposes which a coarser article will answer for," wrote an historical editor in 1870.[59]

Cylinder machines of the second half of the century differed little from Dickinson's early design although the size increased greatly. During the 1870s, cylinder and Fourdrinier machine webs of 86 inches were not uncommon, and the largest sizes to produce paper reached up to 100 inches. Most equipment didn't approach such extremes, however. In 1884, the nation's mills numbered 1,085, with a total of 1168 papermaking machines in use. At least 718 of those devices were of a cylinder design, typically supplied by a single vat. Many of those machines were only 48-inch designs with 36-inch cylinders.[60] References to machine sizes in Weeks and other sources tend toward supporting 54 inches as being one of the most common web widths during the decades following the Civil War.

The implications were obvious to Clapperton:

> From these figures it would appear that the practice in America was to have many small mills with only one narrow cylinder-mold machine, even for making newsprint, while in England the Fourdrinier machine was in use almost exclusively, and greater width and speed had been achieved, especially in those mills making newsprint.[61]

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[59] *One Hundred Years' Progress of the United States*, 295. Italics in original.
[60] Clapperton, *Paper-Making Machine*, 243 and 247.
[61] Clapperton, *Paper-Making Machine*, 247.

By the 1880s, making paper from straw occupied a significant number of cylinder machines, which churned out more and more of the lower quality paper for newspapers and the straw boards for industrial purposes. Machine preferences changed in the two decades following the mid-1880s, however. By the early years of the twentieth century, the balance had shifted: 663 Fourdriniers were in operation, compared to 569 cylinders.[62]

Expanding Production

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the capitalization of firms soared in tandem with the value and volume of paper production, with census data charting the changes in the industry. During the post-war financial crisis of the late 1810s, papermaking ventures failed in droves. Those who survived took part in a strong market for paper produced in the United States, however. Even during that period of financial uncertainly, the value of paper production rose from nearly $1,700,000 in 1810 to $3,000,000 in 1820. With cylinder machines producing cheap grades of paper starting about 1822, volume rose as well. Production value climbed to more than $7,000,000 in 1830. The economic downturn later in that decade put brakes to the overall value of products, which measured less than $5,700,000 according to the next census. The value of paper produced in the U.S. in 1830 was greater than $7,000,000; by 1842, the government tally for 1840 was a mere $5,641,495, but papermakers estimated it as $15,000,000.[63]

[62] Clapperton, *Paper-Making Machine*, 236.
[63] Davis, *Manufacture of Paper*, 54-57.

Antebellum import policies protected American papermakers through low tariffs on the chief raw materials and higher tariffs on competing foreign products.[64] Government protection enhanced the industry's profits, enabling manufacturers to invest in capital improvements. Largely dependent on imports before the Revolution, Americans turned to consumption of their own paper products through the first decade of the nineteenth century.[65] American papermakers fought against the surge of imported paper that followed the end of hostilities with Britain in the years after the War of 1812. Despite an increase in duties from fifteen to thirty percent *ad valorem*, or based on the value of the product, in 1816, demand for paper and production of the commodity rose. Duties on sized and unsized paper were at their highest level of protection in 1828, with rates of ten and twenty cents per pound, respectively.

After slight reductions through 1845, duties shifted again to product value rather than weight, perhaps influenced by the low absolute consumption of pricey foreign paper. Duties assessed by weight encouraged the importation of expensive paper and domestic production of cheap, heavier paper. From the Revolutionary era to the Tariff of 1846, paper imports dropped steadily, declining until they comprised two percent or less of national consumption.[66]

The change of the tariff structure in the 1840s encouraged domestic production rather than imports of both higher quality and less expensive paper, avoiding taxes on the former and the relatively higher shipping costs of the latter. Legislation in 1846, 1857, and 1862 shifted rates from thirty to twenty-four percent. Revisions through 1866

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[64] Although not annotated, a useful compilation of tariffs on paper can be found in L.M. Lamm, *Tariff History of the Paper Industry of the United States, 1789 to 1922*, American Paper and Pulp Association Special Report No. 8 (New York: The American Paper and Pulp Association, 1927).
[65] Gravell and Miller, *American Watermarks*, xxx.
[66] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 192.

established ad valorem rates of thirty-five percent for sized paper such as drawing, writing, and colored printing papers. That high rate also included paperboard imports, which would have competed against the fast growing domestic sector specializing in extra thick papers for boxes and boards. Unsized printing paper, restricted to use for book and newspaper production only, entered with a twenty-percent duty. Rag imports continued to be imported without assessment.[67]

Despite vacillation about the exact level of shelter to be granted to the American industry, tariffs through the end of the Civil War established consistent protection for paper producers. Protectionism allowed domestic manufacturers to charge higher prices and reap greater profits. Despite that home market advantage, demand for imported paper continued through the Civil War. The road to self-sufficiency depended on the practical responses of papermakers to ever-higher consumer demand, in addition to the financial cushion that protectionism provided.

Mechanization dramatically lowered the cost of paper and supported a mass market for many types of books. Not including finance charges and repair costs, machine-made paper could be produced for one-eighth the cost of that made by hand. By mid-century, cheap paper had altered the face of publishing in America. "The present low price resulting from improved machinery; and the low price of printing by steam power has placed newspapers and books in the hands of all; and a great increase of production has followed within the last few years," wrote mill owner James M. Willcox in 1850.[68]

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[67] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing,* 112, 192-193, 195, and 285; and *U.S. Tariff, or Rates of Duties Payable on Goods, Wares and Merchandise, imported into the United States of America, in conformity with the Act of Congress of March 2, 1861, with addenda…,* arr. E.D. Ogden (New York: Philip E. Bogert, 1866), 126 and 27.
[68] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 191-192.

Papermaking historian Lyman Weeks reported that mid-size mills in the 1820s could be set up for craft production for $3,000-$8,000. The majority of mills required investments on the lower side of that estimation; at the same time, large concerns with heavy investments in new technology, such as that of Gilpin or Ames, could be worth $350,000 to $500,000 or even more.[69]

In 1857, a single Fourdrinier machine produced in America cost between $3,400 and $6,000, and its cylinder counterpart from $1,800 to $3,400. A decade later, that ratio remained relatively stable, with the purchase of a Fourdrinier made by one Philadelphia manufacturer requiring an investment of around $6,000 and that of a cylinder papermaking machine about $2,500.[70]

While a significant outlay, the price of a machine represented only a portion of a mill's capitalization. Beaters and multiple tubs at the wet end of the machine prepared stock according to the types of fibers used, holding pulp until it could be combined in proportions and quantities sufficient for continual operation. The American Jordan refiner invented at mid-century provided additional mixing to make pulp uniform, giving papermakers more ability to mix stocks. Calendaring and drying cylinders at the dry end of the machine processed paper for varied finishes and with the speed necessary to avoid breaks in the web. These systems required greater capitalization than a mere machine.

Census data likely underreport the number of mills and therefore also total capitalization and output value, particularly because of smaller mills that may be missing from the records. However, general averages of capitalization and value can be

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[69] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 146.
[70] Freedley, *Philadelphia and Its Manufacturers: A Hand-Book Exhibiting the Development*, 319; and Freedley, *Philadelphia and Its Manufacturers; A Hand-Book of the Great Manufactories and Representative Mercantile Houses of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Edward Young & Co., 1868), 398.

determined from information compiled by Weeks from decennial statistics from 1840 to 1890, scattered information about individual mills, and unofficial industry surveys.[71]

Table 2. **Capitalization in American Mills, 1840-1890**

Year	*Mills*	*Total Capital*	*Average of Capital*	*Value of Products*	*Average Value: Production*	*Cap.*
1840	422	$ 4,745,239	$ 11,245	$ 5,641,495	$ 13,368	1.19
1850	443	$ 7,260,864	$ 16,390	$10,187,177	$ 22,996	1.40
1860	555	$14,052,683	$ 25,320	$21,216,802	$ 38,228	1.51
1870	677	$34,556,014	$ 51,043	$48,849,295	$ 72,156	1.41
1880	742	$48,139,652	$ 64,878	$57,366,860	$ 77,314	1.19
1890	649	$89,829,540	$138,412	$78,937,184	$121,629	0.88

Although aggregate figures disguise trends in equipment selection and specialization, investment in general expanded most vigorously in the 1860s and 1880s, more than doubling average capitalization in both of those decades. The ratios of production to capital do not compare favorably to expressed industry norms of the day.

Manufacturers of better quality book and printing paper sometimes advocated a three-to-one ratio of output to capital, with higher ratios of paper value to investment offering general evidence of business stability, according to Carl Hofmann. More commonly, mill owners expected that annual production value would be twice that of capitalization to ensure stable operations.[72] Such a dictum worked over time to encourage product specialization and the dedication of production systems to a single product, thereby reducing adjustments and enhancing volume production. Expensive equipment was a long-term investment that locked a manufacturer into particular modes of production for decades. Census data show that the overall industry was most robust at

[71] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 209-10, 240, 271, and 289-290.
[72] Hofmann, *Practical Treatise*, 381.

mid-century when technological diversity characterized American papermaking rather than toward the end of the century, when the Fourdrinier had come to dominate domestic production. As a chief example of the shift from handcraft paper to mechanized output, the Fourdrinier eclipsed the matrix of consumer demand, technical innovation, supply difficulties, and American practices. However, that machine became the dominant symbol of an industry increasingly important for reproducing culture.

The need for paper for non-literary purposes comprised a sizeable portion of the nation's output. Paper clothing and everyday accessories became so popular in the United States, England, and France about the time of the American Civil War that a popular English music hall singer gained fame with his song, "The Age of Paper."[73] Fashions in the 1860s and after the Civil War featured paper clothing. Shirt cuffs, collars, shoe soles, and even boots were made of paper. Commercial and industrial products contained or were made of paper, including boxes, wrapping paper, flour bags, roofing paper, twine, stereotyping materials, wallpaper, and doors. An editor reported in 1870 that demand for paper of all types had grown to six times that of just two decades prior, with the increase slightly stronger before the Civil War. The general growth of production also increased the availability of printing papers. Periodical and newspaper production almost tripled in the 1860s, and book sales approximately doubled during that decade. Demand on all fronts was so great "that the wonder is that a sufficiency of stock can be obtained at any price," wrote an editor in 1870.[74]

Plentiful paper supplies bolstered the mechanization of printing presses to keep apace with consumer demand. The cylinder design, experimental chemical processes, and

[73] Hunter, *Papermaking*, 386, and Figs. 273 and 388.
[74] *One Hundred Years' Progress of the United States*, 293.

attempts to escape the yoke of uncertain rag supplies encouraged the production of lower-quality printing paper to an even greater extent than the Fourdrinier. Flexible production made possible by small- and medium-scale output systems encouraged the use of straw as a fiber in printing papers as well as in paperboards well before the introduction of caustic soda processes in the 1850s. The capital-intensiveness of the papermaking industry, competition among firms especially following the disastrous economic downturn in 1883, and the technical interrelatedness of papermaking and printing offers vital background to the vertical consolidation of the paper industry.[75]

In papermaking, women proved critical to ensuring maximum profitability from mechanized production, especially as investment in machines escalated. Women sorted the rags that were a main component of mixed pulps through about 1880. They also cut and inspected paper, removing detritus and providing quality control to ensure the highest sale price. Women's low-cost labor improved the paper made by machines, maximizing profits from industrial production and helping to justify more intensive investment in large-scale equipment by minimizing machine flaws. Cylinder papermaking machines and the ability of manufacturers to employ women as quality control monitors helped to provide a bridge for the industry as it turned toward the highest levels of mass production offered by Fourdriniers. Papermaking systems extended beyond the mill to include publishers, gendered labor patterns in the printing industry, and trajectories of printing equipment machinery development. Each of the factors shaped the industry in the nineteenth century, but none more so than the perennial shortage of fiber.

[75] Naomi Lamoreaux, *The Great Merger Movement in American Business, 1895-1904* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

New Fibers

Significant efforts at establishing fibers alternatives in Western papermaking began in the mid-eighteenth century, although experimentation occurred earlier. The French natural scientist Reaumur was said to have observed a wasp building a papery nest from wood in 1719, inspiring him to suggest that paper could be prepared from wood. Although it is likely that others also had made such a leap of imagination, the concept has become attributed to Reaumur. Later that century, Jacob Christian Schäffer prepared paper from a variety of sources and publicized alternatives to rag fibers. By 1765, he had examined numerous plants, from wood and straw to tree moss and potato skins. Schäffer prepared paper from a variety of vegetable sources, wood and straw.[76]

The best-known attempt to produce paper from alternative fibers prior to the mid-nineteenth century are the experiments of Matthias Koops in England. Koops publicized his work while lobbying for government subsidies, ensuring that those writing the history of papermaking would remember the treatises he printed on his own behalf. Having won patent protection for his straw and wood processes, Koops put to use a small grant given to him to encourage domestic invention. In 1800 and 1801 he printed editions of his treatise on papermaking on wood-and-straw paper of his own making. Both editions featured a dark ochre-colored paper rife with fibrous intrusions. Their watermarked leaves offered a traditional laid finish but rough paper with widely varying thicknesse.[77]

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[76] Sutermeister, *Story of Papermaking*, 20 and 50. Jacob Christian Schäffer, *Neue Versuche und Muster das Pflanzenreich zum Papiermachen und andern Sachen wirthschaftsnützlich zu gebrauchen*, 3 vols. (Regensburg : [s.n.], 1765-1767), held at IPST. Historian of paper Leonard B. Schlosser has identified the content of Schäffer's samples. See Arnold Grummer, "Identification of Paper Samples in Schaffer's Volumes: An Epitome of Schaffer's *Papier-versuche"* [1972?], undated correspondence from Schlosser to Grummer, Historical Collections, IPST.

[77] Matthias Koops, *Historical Account of Substances which have been used to describe events and to convey ideas, from the earliest date to the invention of paper* (London: Printed By T. Burton, 1800).

Despite the promotional support he received, Koops noted that public sentiment resisted innovation because of its association with illicit behavior. According to the popular conception of a bond between new technologies of print reproduction and a rising prevalence of illicit ideas, paper represented an important part of the menace:

> *Vicious* and *libertine* books, say they are, the lasting sources of corruption in *faith* and *morals*. By the means of Paper and writing, false notions in religion, and even highly irritating heresies are broached, and speedily propagated; traitorous correspondencies [sic] are held, and deceitful contrivances are carried on to the ruin of private families, and often to the destruction of happiness in wedlock; and sometimes to the subversion of public administrations, and government….[78]

Koops assured his readers that great social good arose from the spread of new printing technologies, including the one most fundamental to printing in volume: paper.

Koops' flair for invention and self-promotion was unfortunately overshadowed by his lack of business acumen. Before he could make his venture profitable, creditors seized his manufactory, dispersed workers, and halted production with pulp still in the vats. Although Koops claimed perfection of his final product, the dark color of the paper and the visible shives, or clumps of fiber on the surface, indicate that his professed success in making acceptable printing paper more actually should have been described as being in an experimental stage.[79]

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[78] Koops, *Historical Account of Substances*, 21. Italics in original.

[79] Koops's *Historical Account of Substances* included two different types of paper. In what appears to be straw paper, the substrate is a deep, brilliant ochre, with numerous intrusions internal to the paper. The sample fits a late nineteenth-century author's description of Koops's paper, which "was used in its unbleached state, and formed a very ugly paper," according to Alexander Watt, *The Art of Paper-Making: A Practical Handbook of the Manufacture of Paper from Rags, Esparto, Straw, and Other Fibrous Materials, Including the Manufacture of Pulp from Wood Fibre, With a Description of the Machinery and Appliances Used, To Which are Added Details of Processes for Recovering Soda from Waste Liquors* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1890), 80. Laid and watermarked, the yellow paper measures .15-.21 mm in thickness, varying significantly within each sheet, as is characteristic of handmade paper. Within the same first edition, sheets of a light brown-gray color appear at signature Y. That second type of laid paper measures .14-.19 mm on the first leaf of the signature. (Measurements from the copy held at the Cary Collection, Rochester Institute of Technology.) No record exists identifying either sample as being exclusively straw or wood; indeed, Koops failed to differentiate his paper fibers, instead claiming his

Regardless of Koops' knack for self-promotion and the fact that his venture succeeded in technical aspects, his production process could not compete economically against production using rags. The price of rags remained low enough in England at the start of the century to discourage Koops' well-publicized processes and discolored product. American attempts to explore alternative fibers rose and fell with the price of rags, which itself largely reflected the price of cotton. Local knowledge, the growing demand for varied types of paper, expanding transportation networks, increased literacy, and government policies deeply shaped technological developments.

Many pulps for book papers included at least small amounts of straw or other materials such as hemp or ground wood in order to stretch scarce rag fibers. The practice of mixing other fibers into a rag furnish had a long – if muted – history among those who prepared pulp. The commonness of the practice calls into question applying to it the term of "adulteration." Selling stock mixtures as if they were comprised solely of rags tied the increasingly mechanized trade to its historical roots and reconciled mechanization with traditional notions of what ensured quality products. In this way, the past could be seamlessly joined to an ideology of progress. More practically, stretching pulp increased the profits of vendors who were able to pass off their products as being manufactured with rags. Consumers of paper continued to increase their demands upon the industry, and mechanization required larger fiber supplies in order to keep machines running for profitability. By the 1820s, observers noted with disdain the fact that many papermakers

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treatise as an example of wood and straw fibers. The two samples may be different versions of wood-and-straw paper rather than separate examples. The second edition contains laid, watermarked paper of deep ochre (.11-.15 mm in depth per leaf) and, at signatures S and T, cream (.13-.19 and .13-.19 mm, respectively). In that second edition, Koops reported that he had succeeded in making both cream and white paper from straw, but he gave no specific identification of the substrates for his books. It should be noted that tension within a sheet or curling due to finishing processes, in addition to variance inherent in hand processes, may distort caliper measurements.

added "junk" to their rags, according to *Niles' Register*.[80] Publishers sometimes required papermakers to warrant the rag content of their papers.[81]

American papermakers prepared pulp in uncovered kettles and tubs before the introduction of closed-vessel cooking. Through the 1840s, they combined stocks that required more processing along with those needing less, cooking hard and soft stock together in open heating units rather than preparing them separately and later combining them. The capacity of the beaters and washers before mid-century was between one-eighth to one-fourth of those used in the 1880s, when the American papermaking industry became the undisputed leader in the world. "Light, narrow, slow-running cylinder machines were almost exclusively employed," noted Charles Davis, chronicler of American industry. While easy to repair and to run, such machines were not ideal for producing finer grades of paper until later in the century. Many operations, such as drying, continued to be performed by hand.[82] Although Americans did not succeed at commercially producing pulp from ground wood until after the Civil War, the combination of experimental production knowledge and open kettle processing helps to explain the presence of so many shives in paper before the mid-1850s.

In the aftermath of the Panic of 1837, rags and textile cuttings became quite scarce and expensive. Manila paper, produced from jute and old rope knots, found ready application among those satisfied with a rougher grade. Low cotton prices discouraged but did not completely halt the search for rag alternatives during the 1840s. According to

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[80] "Manufacture of Paper," *Niles' Weekly Register* (Nov. 21, 1829): 194.
[81] Warren S. Tryon and William Charvat, *The Cost Books of Ticknor and Fields and Their Predecessors, 1832-1858* (New York: The Bibliographical Society of America, 1949) is a source with multiple records about the firm's arrangements requiring certain manufacturers to warrant that only rag fibers had been used for specific lots of paper.
[82] Davis, *Manufacture of Paper*, 59-60.

Weeks, paper manufacturers reported that American rags were the basis for almost two-thirds of the pulp produced in the United States in 1850. Twelve percent derived from waste materials from textiles, naval roping, and bagging, and imports accounted for the other fibers.[83] By separating papers into first quality or seconds to be sold more cheaply, manufacturers ensured profits for even poorer quality substrates. Selling all papers produced for commercial purposes rather than recycling much of the lower-level substrates allowed machines to be kept running profitably.

Straw

The most important early American alternative fiber source was straw, a material that was available, cheap, and amenable to processing with potash. In 1828, William Magaw of Meadville, Pennsylvania, patented a process for turning straw into paper. According to one version of the origin of Magaw's process, the inventor often absentmindedly plucked pieces of straw out of the hopper as a diversion while working but one day noticed that the straw had disintegrated into pulpy fiber similar to that used to make wrapping paper. After corresponding with George Shryock, owner of the Hollywell Mill of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Magaw received an invitation to join him in experimenting with straw in the summer of 1829. For several weeks, they produced paper by hand, making Shryock the first of four American paper mill owners known to have refocused mill capacity upon production from rags to straw pulp during the pre-1850s experimental period.

[83] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 272. The figure of rags comprising 88 percent of American paper in 1860 has been misreported by numerous sources, who have misread Weeks. That author's citation comes from material in the 1860 Census that deals with the year 1850.

In November 1829, Shryock started considering machines that would be more suited to his new venture. He examined an Ames machine but instead asked a mechanic to construct for him a cylinder model at the Hollywell Paper Mill. That winter he shifted from kettle production to a steam boiler. The increased production capacity boosted his output from 20-30 reams per day to 150-200 reams.

Shryock also discovered that paper breaks on the fast-running machine often wrapped around a press roll in layers, creating an extra thick paper. He expanded the mill and began producing both paper and strawboards. After the death of a business partner and a dispute with creditors, Shryock continued his work under a new partnership, G.A. Shryock & Co., at a mill at the mouth of the Falling Spring, near Shippensburg. With eight engines for producing pulp and as many papermaking machines, the mill produced more than a thousand pounds of paper in an hour.[84]

Shryock claimed to have attempted to make paper from a wide variety of materials, from all types of barley, buckwheat, oat, rye, and wheat straw; cornhusks; white pine shavings; and willow wood. He also attempted to whiten straw paper in order to make it an acceptably light color for printing. The low cost of good rags (when available), which ranged from 2-1/2 to 4 cents a pound, was much a bargain compared to the high cost of bleaching. Shryock predicted that southern agriculture would be the most productive place for papermakers to turn to for fiber sources due to high growth, fiber length, and strength of fibers.

The period between Magaw's work in the late 1820s and early 1830s and the better known attempts to make straw paper with caustic soda processes in the 1850s

[84] George A. Shryock, *History of the Origin and Manufacture of Straw & Wood Paper* (Philadelphia: [G.A. Shryock], 1866), 6-12. Contemporaries sometimes spelled the papermaker's name "Shyrock."

presents a gap in knowledge about American industrial practices and the curatorial practices that must be informed by them. Historical references to American, French, and English mill output during this period note only production of pasteboard, wrapping paper, and, in France more than in England, bleached straw printing paper.

Magaw, a potash maker by trade, had experience with the positive effects of treating straw with alkalis and perhaps was also more aware of the potential profits to be earned by chemical manufacturers, who might find new uses for their products. Producing potash involved placing wood ashes in straw-lined hoppers that, when filled with water, slowly allowed a liquor to drain out. Potash resulted from capturing, boiling, and purifying that liquor. Shryock also used potash in order to remove the silica from the stems and recover the vegetation's cellulose content, but then increased the calcium content by adding lime.[85]

He noted that wheat straw required more lime and oat straw required less. Oat straw produced the least cellulose and rye straw the most per unit. Soil with limestone produced straw with more silex, or silica content, than slate farmland, which increased the problems of pulping the material. Long rye straw cooked with water (and especially with water exposed to limestone) produced a fiber that was more usable than that produced with destructive lime treatment. Higher heat rather than more lime was the preferred treatment for achieving quality paper free from knots.[86]

The properties of even the best paper made from straw differed from that produced from rags. Straw provided durability, much like high quality linen, but the shortness of its fibers provided much less folding capacity. That brittleness made straw a

[85] Shryock, *History of the Origin and Manufacture*, 8- 9 and 11-12.
[86] Shryock, *History of the Origin and Manufacture*, 13-14.

less permanent paper when folded repeatedly. Unlike rags, straw also required significant bleaching to purge the finished products of a characteristic yellow color. Knotty growth segments on the plant stems necessitated strong chemical decomposition, which often damaged the rest of the fiber. Straw paper gave off a characteristic rattle when shaken, due to the stiffness of the paper. Despite the desirability of a stiff paper for official documents, historians more often have reported the use of straw paper for packaging rather than writing or printing. Its hard surface eliminated the need to "size" the paper, or coat it with a water resistant substance such as animal gelatin or alum, in order to ready it for accepting but not absorbing ink. The substrate's hardness wore down the type, which made straw paper undesirable for long-term use by printers.

Shryock's facility, which operated until it burned down in 1864, dabbled in producing more refined straw printing paper in its early years. Unfortunately, knowledge about the efforts of Shryock or others to produce unbleached straw printing paper between the early 1830s and 1850 focuses on strawboard production. Manufacturers regularly exaggerated their success with new materials as part of claiming broader patents rights or in order to establish a more dominant position within the industry. Additionally, reports confirming the production of paper made with straw often do not mention whether the material made served as paperboard or was fine enough for printing. This ambiguity cautions historians to exercise a fair amount of skepticism when evaluating the prevalence of straw paper before 1850.

Though he himself claimed to have produced printing paper for a time as part of his range of experimental production during the 1830s, Shryock did not assert that he had succeeded at commercially manufacturing printing paper. Furthermore, he declined to

suggest that his efforts had been focused on the more lucrative and difficult task of creating writing paper rather than merely on common strawboards. The lack of evidence suggests that historians should cautiously interpret reports of straw paper production that do not specify the grade of material manufactured.

Shryock enthusiastically advertised what he believed to be the success of his efforts, noting, "The straw paper [in samples] was distributed over this entire country and in Europe in pieces of from two inches square to a full sheet, and excited the astonishment of the paper manufacturers of the world." [87] Shryock's contemporary fame derived from the strength and curious color of the wrapper paper he produced. *Niles' Register* noted,

> We have seen some further specimens of paper made from straw and from blue grass, according to McGaw's [sic] patent. The invention is said to prove entirely successful. A manufactory has been established at Chambersburg, in this state, and machinery, etc. is preparing for the manufacture of 300 reams a day. The paper is firm and strong, carries ink well, and is very suitable for wrapping, and it is believed, for hanging also, and for all other purposes where strong paper is required, and can be furnished at a price so much below that made from any other material as to supersede every other of the same kind.[88]

It is uncertain whether the editor's comment referred to printing or wrapping paper samples, but subsequently *Niles' Register* wrapped its newspapers in Shryock's straw paper as a protective cover for mailing. [89] Although multiple historical accounts repeat Lyman Weeks' soft assertion that some editions of *Niles' Register* were printed in 1829 upon Shryock's paper, that claim cannot be supported. Furthermore, no original

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[87] Shryock, *History of the Origin,* 5-6.
[88] "Paper," *Niles' Weekly Register* (Oct. 18, 1828): 117.
[89] Untitled, *Niles' Weekly Register* (August 29, 1829): 3. The only sample of straw during the late 1820s matching this description in issues of that publication held by the American Antiquarian Society is a single leaf bound prior to the title page in volume 36. Until the late twentieth century, it was standard practice among binders and repositories to discard damaged, obtrusive, or sometimes simply unattractive fly leaves of valuable volumes when processed for accessioning. In the absence of straw printing paper, the presence of a single wrapping paper leaf within that 1829 volume gives valuable but not conclusive evidence.

copies of the single issue of *The Philadelphia Bulletin* supposedly printed in part with Shryock's product are known to exist.[90]

Magaw's and Shryock's technique did, however, transform an agricultural waste material into a commodity, and particularly attracted the attention of papermakers in Pennsylvania and New York, where straw could be acquired easily and cheaply from nearby farmers. Mill owners found that the initial economy of straw quickly changed to higher prices as demand transformed the agricultural waste into a marketable commodity. Rather than turning back to the consumers of printed goods for fiber supplies to produce paper, papermakers looked toward sources separated from the end uses of their product. Reliant upon land ownership and husbandry practices within the control of members of the industry, timber harvests could be planned in advance, guaranteeing the raw materials necessary to support investment in large-scale output machinery.

Demand for paper heightened in the quarter century before the Civil War, but domestic suppliers found ways of producing paper to meet the needs of consumers. The volume of rags imported more than doubled from 1850 to 1860, making the United States the world's largest consumer of paper by the start of the Civil War. Americans papermakers produced more paper than either England or France. Moreover, the demand of American consumers for paper surpassed that of those two nations combined.[91]

Starting with potash and shifting to caustic soda, American papermakers created a fertile ground for adaptive technological change, including the refinement and ascendancy of chemical wood processing. Technical advances in continuous paper

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[90] A careful historian, Weeks wrote, "It has been said that an edition of the New Testament was printed on it at a cost of only five cents a copy and in 1829 it was used for several issues of Nile's Weekly Register [sic]." (Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 221). Shryock's own testimonial is the source for Weeks' note about the Philadelphia publication's use of the paper.

[91] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 285 and 272.

processing and machinery with flexible but rapid output encouraged pragmatism among papermakers faced with frequent raw material shortages and constantly rising demand for their goods. The Fourdrinier machine has often been seen as a main driver of the nineteenth-century paper industry, but a host of factors combined to position that artifact successfully within a complex system of industrial policies, social needs, and technological practices. The way in which those papermaking workers balanced anticipated uses of paper with other factors in everyday manufacturing operations has unevenly but significantly affected the longevity of historical materials.

Representing large-scale and continuous production, the Fourdrinier machine became, after its introduction in the early nineteenth-century, a physically imposing technological artifact. Combining most of the tasks necessary for preparing pulp from rags and a never-ending wire web to produce unbroken paper, the machine's own immense size embodied the enormous output of which it was possible. Although workers cut the paper into sheets until electrification in the last quarter of the century enabled presses to accept continuously fed paper, the unremitting production of the Fourdrinier for many symbolizes progress in the American printing industry.

American papermakers made no simple jump from hand production to Fourdriniers. With the continuing use of cylinder machines in the modern paper industry, even a "most wonderful machine" such as the Fourdrinier must be historicized as an artifact whose potential rested on the social and economic matrix into which it fit, as well as its marvel as a complex technological solution. The incremental design developments and practices surrounding its introduction included experimentation with chemical processes, raw materials, and colorants diffusing across related industries, joining the

capabilities of American papermakers with those of printers who attempted to keep up with the voracious appetite of a paper-consuming society.

Erotic publications offer evidence about incremental innovation and everyday work practices that have slipped from the historical record. A close study of American papermaking practices shows, however, that production practices, expressed as continual innovations, made jumps in technological progress commercially feasible. Makers of paper with straw, wood, and cotton all proved to be boosters of their interests, turning scarcity into an instrument for revealing the capacity of new resources that they controlled. Technical processes were fundamental to the expanding presence of print in American society. Indecent books offer evidence of the technological practices that made possible a domestic trade in erotica; they also highlight the dangers of accepting simplistic trajectories in either technology or literature.

Chapter Four

The Sporting Whip and *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia*

The social milieu that gave rise to an abundance of erotic publications mingled with, and was sustained by, non-rag fibers and active national industrial policies. Two examples, one from a newspaper and another a print inserted into a book, help to illustrate the role of straw in American erotica publications. Studying these materials opens the way for a comparison of papers in books considered indecent and produced in the United States. Rag shortages led papermakers to experiment with domestically available fibers, and knowledge of these practices can improve the identification and dating of clandestine imprints.

Unusual for its survival, a peculiarly colored newspaper substrate from 1843 establishes that Americans mass produced commercial-grade printing paper with significant straw content at least a decade before that fiber was known to have been used widely for such a purpose. *The New York Sporting Whip*, which was strongly identified with New York City's popular semi-erotic press of the 1830s and 1840s, can be identified through non-destructive analysis as the earliest known surviving example of American machine-made straw paper. The scandal sheet offers evidence of the rich antebellum innovation tradition that paved the way for the transition from rags to chemically-processed wood in American and world paper production.

In the case of *The New York Sporting Whip*, the availability of a substitute for a publisher's usual rag paper may have meant the difference between publishing an issue and forgoing income. Alternative practices may have appeared without fanfare in some

periods or gained undue acclaim at the hands of boosters in other times. Examining artifacts can provide evidence to determine actual practices.

Production marks clearly link the 1843 issue to the mechanized production of straw paper, even without chemical analysis of the substrate. Through a similar manner of technical analysis, illustrations integrated into a rebound copy of *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* can be shown to be consistent with American production practices from the 1850s. Knowledge about these practices can facilitate dating component parts of that book.

Similarities to a sample included in Joel Munsell's 1856 edition of *A Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making* suggest that an American manufacturer, rather than a European one, provided at least the straw substrate upon which sexually graphic anti-Catholic engravings were printed.[1] The collector who pieced together illustrations for the rebound version of the novel *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* also appears to have worked from available resources, allowing the determination that the book was bound together during the 1850s. The opportunity to include explicit engravings overrode compunctions about using an unusual substrate. These two examples portray American erotica and the paper upon which it was printed as the results of pragmatic responses that relied upon local resources and knowledge to overcome social and material boundaries.

The New York Sporting Whip

The explosion of cheap newspapers in the 1830s and 1840s in New York took place alongside a wealth of public performance opportunities, from minstrel shows and

[1] Joel Munsell, A *Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1856). Although other editions of this work exist, only the 1856 edition includes straw paper samples.

theatrical productions to evangelical and lyceum speakers. Penny papers reported on the personalities known through these events, bringing public and private together through publications hawked on the streets to passers-by, to be read while in transit or at eating houses, or brought into the home. They made private worlds public by threatening the exposure of illicit activities, drawing readers into reports of activities by those who chose the spotlight and those who were thrust into it.

Weeklies such as *The New York Sporting Whip* helped lay the groundwork for a marketplace for indecent books. An unusual surviving instance of straw used for the production of a racy newspaper in the 1840s connects the milieu that gave rise to a plethora of erotic books and experiments with alternative fibers and national industrial policies commencing decades before.

"New York in the early 1840s was the nursery of American popular culture," writes Helen Horowitz of the great American metropolis that became the breeding ground for public forms of entertainment that challenged social decorum. A descendant of the gossipy street and theatrical newspapers of the 1830s, *The New York Sporting Whip* competed for sales against weekly newspapers that traded in gossip and innuendo about prostitution and theatrical personalities. Periodicals such as these commercialized gossip, theatrical tidbits, commentary about famous prostitutes, and racy humor, especially in New York City. *The New York Sporting Whip* regularly featured articles denouncing hypocrisy and relating details about popular courtesans to readers. Revealing the transgressions of hazily identified local personalities, Dixon, the publisher, more likely intended to blackmail subjects rather than to encourage moral reform.[2]

[2] Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, "Another 'American Cruikshank' Found: John H. Manning and the New York Sporting Weeklies," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 112, part 1 (2004): 93-126,

The New York Sporting Whip continued previous titles of *The Whip, or Satirist of New-York and Brooklyn,* which began on December 24, 1841, and ran weekly until a second volume of the publication, renamed *The Whip,* commenced on July 9, 1842. Renumbering as a third volume began afresh on January 28, 1843, as *The New York Sporting Whip*, which lasted a mere six issues. The New York sporting press emerged and declined in those three short years, with editors ultimately falling short of being able to defend their scurrilous writing from prosecution as obscene libel. After a flurry of entanglements in 1841 and 1842 with New York authorities, much of the weekly sporting press closed down.[3]

Physical details of the remaining publications offer evidence of the technical and economic circumstances also pressing on the publisher of *The New York Sporting Whip.* Surviving examples of *The New York Sporting Whip* exist from January 28, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, Feb. 18, Feb. 25, and March 4 of 1843, with the last appearing to be the final issue of the publication. One of those issues presents an unusual surviving example of a mass readership publication printed what appears to be straw paper. Like other lesser-known publications, that newspaper existed within the same technological and social frame that made possible the penny press, upon which much greater attention has been focused.[4]

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quote from 93. Horowitz describes in detail the publishing circles involved in the production of such newspapers in "The Sporting Weeklies and Obscene Libel," in *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 159-193. Forthcoming work by Katherine Hijar traces semi-erotic representations in popular cultural productions, such as sheet music, the sporting press, and other verbal texts in the antebellum period and immediately after the Civil War.

[3] Copies of *The New York Sporting Whip* examined include rag paper editions dated Jan. 28, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, Feb. 18, Feb 25, 1843, and March 4, 1843; and a straw paper edition dated March 4, 1843, are held by the American Antiquarian Society and filed under "Racy Newspapers." The issues measure 49" x 33" and are smaller in size than *The Whip, or Satirist of New-York and Brooklyn* and *The Whip*, which measure 54" x 40" and 53" x 40".

[4] A study published Oct. 4, 1934, in the *Paper Trade Journal* surveyed American newspapers from 1830 to 1900 but found no papers comprised entirely of straw. Only rag paper appeared through 1868, with straw added in other publications printed before 1880. Ground wood fiber appeared frequently within rag stock

Much of the advertising for the newspaper remained the same during that time, with certain issues containing pairs of identical ads. The reuse of a broken stereotyped ad for press operator Samuel Bingham makes it clear that the publisher stereotyped the plates in anticipation of large press runs. The order in which the publications were printed can be determined by type evidence. The masthead, type, and vertical rules show evidence of type wear. The newspaper was, in fact, probably printed on a cylinder press. Nineteenth-century publishers commonly arranged in-kind payment for printing services, particularly after the introduction of costly cylinder presses.

This printing custom makes it likely that Samuel Bingham's advertisement soliciting new customers for his Napier press came into the newspaper as full or partial payment for his printing services on *The New York Sporting Whip*. Bingham described himself as a pressman and the new manager of a Napier press located in the basement of the *Evening Tattler*, a daily known to New Yorkers and associated with fiction newspapers sold through the mail across the country. Renting or buying the press on terms to relieve the original owner from the high cost of a cylinder press, Bingham sought to fill press time with any possible jobs.

A close comparison of pages printed from the same plates shows damage in several areas of the four-page rag issue not present in the eight-page straw version, including the carving out of sections at the bottom in a way that removed words on the bottom line as well as portions of letters in the line above. Partial letters and completely missing words in the rag issue make it appear that the publisher produced the complete issue first upon straw, then the partial issue upon rag paper. *Figure 4.1* shows the lower

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after 1868. Paper with chemically-treated straw remained in much better condition than that including ground wood. See B.W. Scribner, "Preservation of Newspaper Records," *Paper Trade Journal* 99 (14): 31-35.

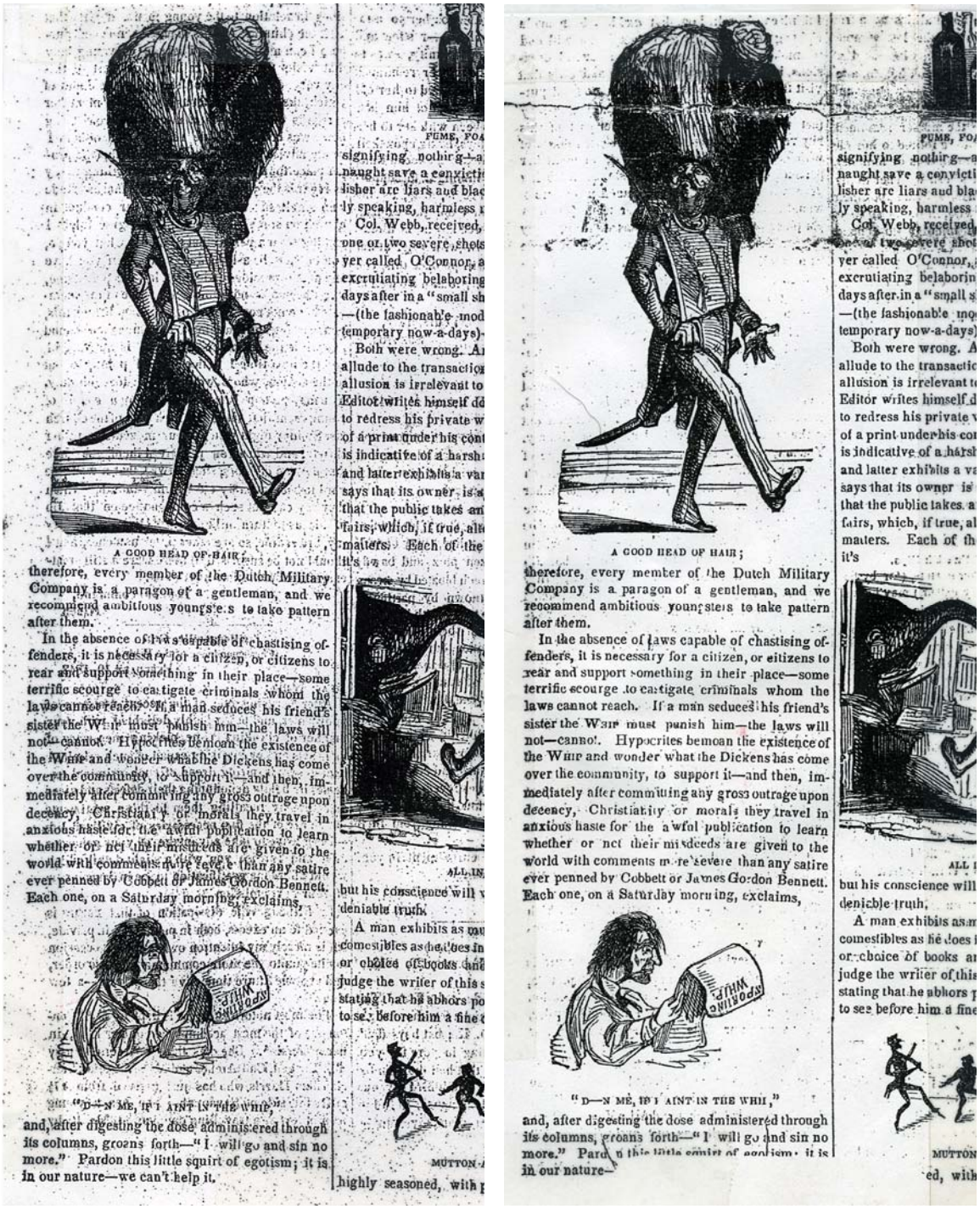

Fig. 4.1. *The New York Sporting Whip*, March 4, 1843 (left, straw; right, rag)

left corner of page one of each issue. The regularity and width of the missing plate area suggests that rather than a fissure caused by the extreme pressure of a cylinder press, a

worker planed away sections to accommodate a change in the press apparatus with which it was printed. The textual and graphic representations remained the same in the pages shared by the two productions, but printed areas on the yellow, translucent substrate bled through from the verso more than the rag paper with cutaway flaws on its front page. Neither version could have been considered visually ideal by readers, but the ability to publish the newspaper at all may have been of greater import to the publisher.[5]

The final edition of *The New York Sporting Whip* provides a curiosity of printing suggesting that the publisher faced dire financial straits in the short spring season during which the newspaper was sold. Most surviving issues of the newspaper contain eight pages printed on rag newsprint. The final publication of March 4, 1843, exists in versions of eight pages printed on straw paper and four pages on rag, with the latter sharing plates for the first, second, third, and eighth pages of the former. While the sheets have similar dimensions, the printed area of the straw edition measures several millimeters less than those of the usual eight-page rag editions, showing that the straw substrate shrank more than the rag paper. Other differences may have affected the reception of the publication in its variant forms.

Both straw and rag versions offered identical textual material. Short articles and small vignettes fill the quadruple-columned front page. Accompanied by short captions, the wood engravings only peripherally relate to the editorial matter. They appear to have been chosen for visual relief and the ability of a caption to wittily link images to gossipy narrative rather than to convey information independently. The captions offer crucial

[5] *The New York Sporting Whip*, March 4, 1843 (straw and rag issues). Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

connecting material between the running commentary and the art; the centered captions are, in fact, linkages between justified editorial matter above and below the vignettes.

The interior of the four-page rag version shares plates for unnumbered pages two and three of the straw publication. More pointed in references to local events than the front page, interior text reports and speculates on the lives of theatrical personalities, and trades barbs with editors of competing scandal sheets. Loose personal behavior and adultery by local citizens came within the purview of the publication's notice, with the editor purporting that the newspaper acted as a "whip" upon local malefactors in the absence of official authority to enforce moral behavior. Occasionally editors of newspapers such as *The New York Sporting Whip* apologized for errors of reporting or the omission of exculpatory information. Most likely such retractions resulted from extortion payments to the publisher. Considered by some to be an organ of blackmail, the newspaper served as a roaming guardian of public morals, according to its editor.

That *The New York Sporting Whip* and similar publications provided fair and balanced information about illicit activities and their perpetrators is doubtful. But within the material of the paper itself, evidence of the unusual production techniques necessary to producing the March 4, 1843, edition easily can be seen. The yellow paper is slightly transparent rather than opaque, with a hard finish. When shaken, its rattle matches that described as being characteristic of straw composition. Notably smooth, well formed, and free of intrusions, the paper appears to have been made with a caustic chemical carefully washed out of the pulp.

Digital microscopy of fibers at the paper edge reveals a pulp mixture. The presence of a blue strand visible at a magnification of 200 times combine with the widely

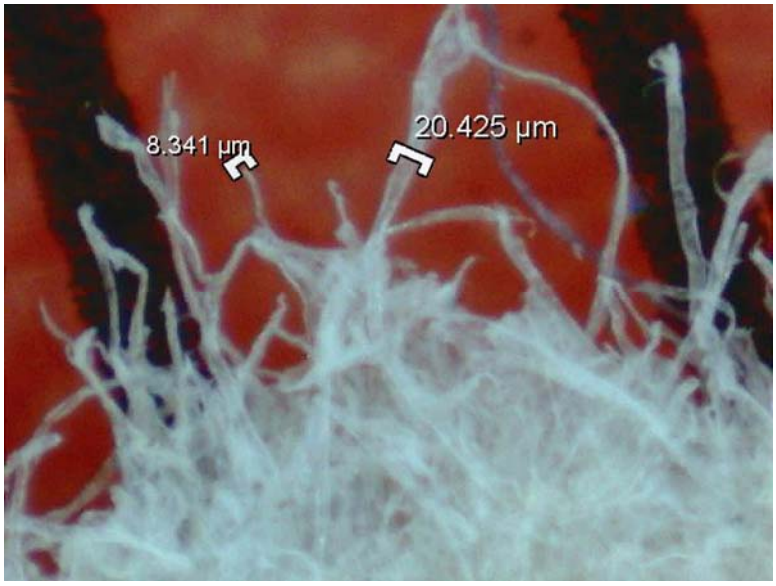

Fig. 4.2. *The New York Sporting Whip*, 200x magnification of straw fibers

varying widths, vascular structures, and pointed ends of certain fibers to indicate that the substrate is a composite of a large amount of straw with an unknown quantity of rag pulp (fig. 4.2). Blue fibers can be detected in paper that contains vat-dyed textiles; even bleaching in the nineteenth century could not remove all dyes from recycled rags.[6]

Straw fibers have a variety of shapes, as shown in *Figure 4.3*: large, balloon-like pith cells (marked P) or serrated-outline epidermal cells (marked S). While it is unlikely that these structures can be identified easily when examining formed paper rather than the repulped and stained substrate, the characteristic size of straw fibers (8-20 micrometers) is visible, as are examples of the pointed or blunt ends of individual fibers sporadically present among straw fibers.[7]

The lack of a large number of cotton fibers in the edge-analysis sample does not mean that other sections of the substrate do not contain that material. Admittedly,

[6] *The New York Sporting Whip*, March 4, 1843 (straw issue). Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.
[7] F.D. Armitage, *An Atlas of the Commoner Paper Making Fibres: An Introduction to Paper Microscopy* ([London]: The Guildhall Publishing Co., [1957]), plate 19.

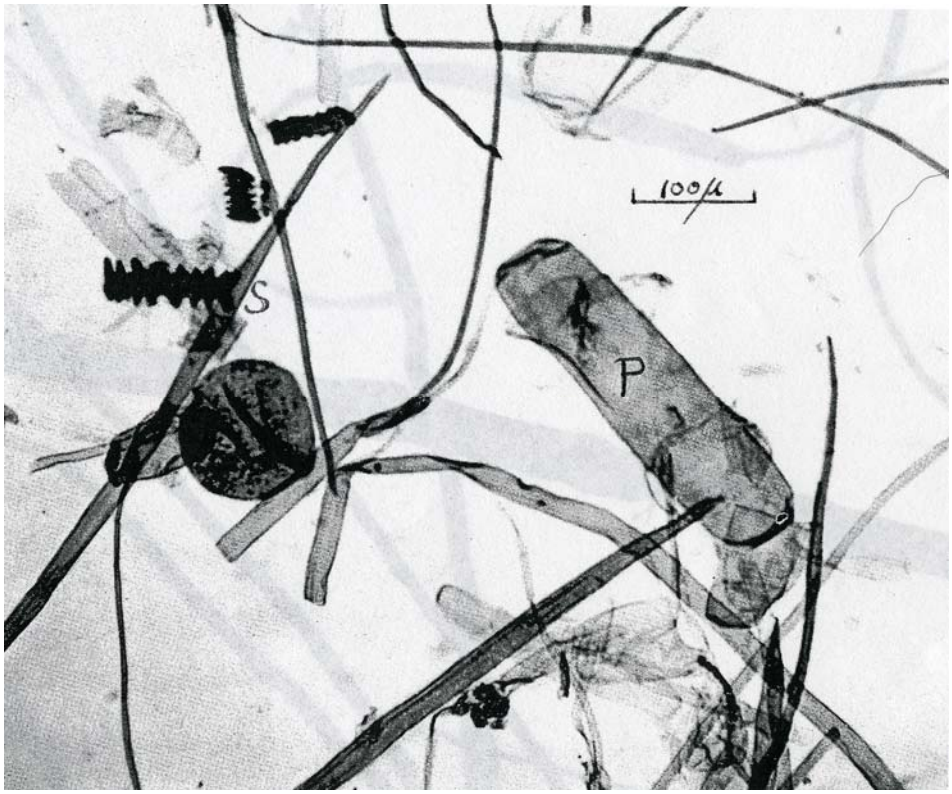

Fig. 4.3. Wheat straw fibers

destructive sampling provides more accurate assessment of the proportional fiber content of a paper, but developing non-destructive techniques is a crucial element of integrating rare artifacts into studies of American publishing. Straw fibers for this type of paper in 1843 would have been considered highly experimental.

The paper can be determined to have been produced on a machine, an unidentified mill operator having integrating a non-rag fiber into large-scale production. Seen at an angle with a raked light source, the seam of a papermaking machine appears toward the top of the folio in the margins (fig. 4.4).[8] By sewing together the ends of a length of wire mesh, papermakers created an endless loop for continual production. Occurring only on machine-made paper, such seams produce shadows because the lesser amount of pulp

[8] *The New York Sporting Whip*, March 4, 1843 (straw issue). Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

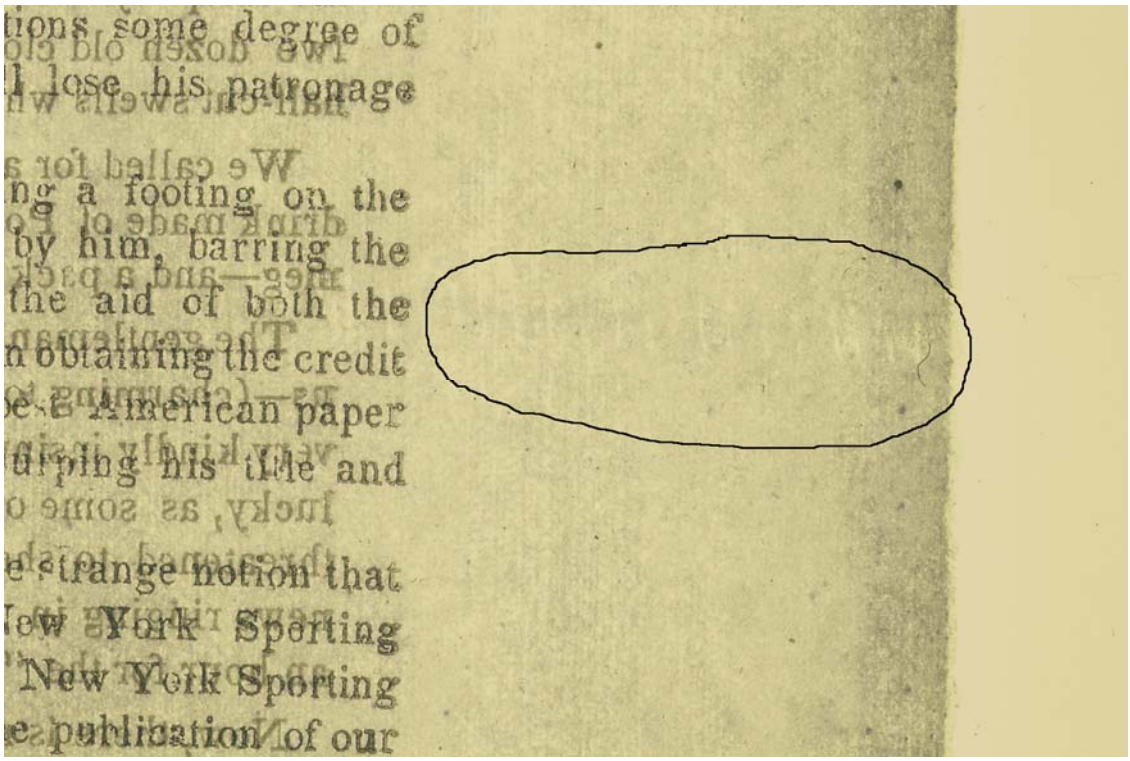

Fig. 4.4. *The New York Sporting Whip*, web seam and vertical striations

deposited on top of them creates a shadowy outline of the raised stitching.[9]

The web seam's appearance verifies that during a period for which paper historians have not recorded any American mills devoted to straw paper production, at least one owner devoted output to mechanized production with that fiber. The operation likely was sizeable, due to the necessity for storing bulky straw bales for months between harvest and paper production.

The maker of this specific straw paper may in the future be determined by locating better-known publications that exhibit the vertical striations evident along the length of *The New York Sporting Whip,* along with similar wire seam marks.[10]

[9] "Should any of our readers undertake a special study of stitch marks in early American machine-made papers, their work may eventually enable us to classify, document, and date some of these papers by their individual stitch-mark patterns. This would advance the study of early nineteenth-century American-made paper considerably," writes Keith Arbour in the introduction to Thomas L. Gravell and George Miller, *American Watermarks 1690-1835,* 2nd rev. ed. (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2002), xxv.

Although lacking the chain lines characteristic of laid paper, the straw substrate contains slight shadows caused by a peculiarly noticeable wire pattern. In the margins of the newspaper, the striations number from twelve to thirteen lines per inch, with only eleven seen in occasional ranges across the sheet. Stretching across the width of a machine, wires making these marks can be used to determine the minimum size of mesh for preparing the paper. Given the dimensions and undeckled edges of the paper, the machine that produced the paper was either a small machine that produced paper about 17" wide, or above-average size equipment manufacturing paper twice that size. The more common employment of cylinder machines for making paper with straw suggests that equipment of that design or workers with experience in that type of production would have been involved.

The straw paper gained its ribbed appearance from a highly unusual, imported dandy roll, because the cylinders for impressing watermarks on paper were not yet manufactured in the United States in 1843. Calendaring finished the paper to provide a smooth surface, indicating that a mill held a substantial investment in papermaking

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[10] This dissertation has located a similar (but not identical) vertical striation pattern in one of the works published by vendors selling illicit material, viz, an American reprinting of George W.M Reynold's sensational novel, *Life in London* (New York: Williams Brothers, 1847). Certain gatherings of the book were printed on a white wove paper with vertical ribs of a different measure than the *New York Sporting Whip*. Although the rag content appears consistent across all pages, striated paper was not used throughout the book. Key studies have identified the origin of undated paper through the spacing of chainlines or the wires between chains in laid paper, and these methods are relevant to identifying striations origins. See David Vander Meulen, "The Identification of Paper without Watermarks: The Example of Pope's *Dunciad*," *SB* 37 (1984): 58-81; Allan Stevenson, "Paper as Bibliographical Evidence," *The Library*, 5th ser., 17 (1962): 197-212 and *The Problem of the Missale Speciale*[cq] (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1967); and John Carter and Graham Pollard, *An Enquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets* (1934; reprinted New York: Haskell House Publishers, Ltd., 1971). The technique and problems of attempting to identify or date paper through chainlines is outlined by Paul Needham, "Allan H. Stevenson and the Bibliographical Uses of Paper," *SB* 47 (1994): 23-64; John Bidwell, "The study of paper as evidence, artefact, and commodity," in *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth Century Bibliography*, ed. Peter Davison (1992; New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1998), 69-82; and G. Thomas Tanselle, "The Bibliographical Description of Paper," in *SB* 24 (1971): 27-67. No published works look closely at such marks on machine-made paper of the nineteenth century.

systems. The paper may have been produced as an experiment with straw. Lower rag imports in 1843 required resourcefulness in obtaining fibers for making pulps of a consistency appropriate for printing papers. Batch production would have been more common during sudden rag shortages.

The undesirable translucency of straw paper helps to explain why so few printed items on that material exist from before 1850. Regardless of the business strategy underlying the publisher's need to print a single issue on straw paper, the collection survival of that version probably resulted from its more complete textual content. Without the survival of the rag issue to distinguish the straw version as being more comprehensive, it is unlikely that the stiffer, yellow version would have been collected. A single copy of that newspaper represents only the tip of the trials that American papermakers made with alkaline processes.

Selecting straw paper may have been a last resort for a publisher anxious to produce a full weekly issue for street sales. Competing for street sales in the market for entertainment news, gossip, and sporting advertisements, Dixon certainly faced an imperative to get his paper to press and out to customers, regardless of the type of paper available. Just why the publisher switched from straw back to rag is not clear. Perhaps printing upon the cheap straw paper proved undesirable for marketing and served merely as a stopgap measure. A local paper shortage or financial dispute with the customary paper vendor may have cut off supplies and forced Dixon to look elsewhere. Although a national paper market tied to the expansion of railroads emerged in the 1840s, printers still relied heavily upon local papermakers. The appearance of machine-made straw paper suitable for low-level printing jobs in New York City presents to historians both regional

and local connections. The publisher may have purchased supplies from an unknown New York-area papermaker who devoted mill capacity to a short-lived, capital-intensive, and experimental venture. It is likely that an established, large paper mill experienced with straw processing and a range of products produced the commodity.

The dearth of surviving straw paper examples from before the 1850s makes it difficult to track the strategy that most closely explains the dual publication of *The New York Sporting Whip*. Without the whiteness, rag content, or market condition that collectors and institutional holders prefer when selecting items for acquisition, paper produced from alternative fibers generally is underrepresented in major collections across the United States. It is impossible to estimate the actual prevalence of non-rag fiber paper from the scarce samples that can be located, and the small number that can be found makes it difficult to determine correct procedures for identifying, handling, and storing those remaining examples.

The New York Sporting Whip precedes the earliest identified sample of American produced-straw printing paper by more than two decades. In its color, slight translucency, hard finish, rattle, and touch, the 1843 publication strongly resembles one of two straw paper samples enclosed in the 1856 edition of Joel Munsell's *Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making*.[11] Those inserts, produced by John Thorpe of Cincinnati, Ohio, and John Ames of Springfield, Massachusetts, are the earliest American straw papers previously identified.

Thorpe's sample of thick yellow wrapping paper featured abundant golden brown shives. He made no attempt to bleach the paper, allowing its color to correspond with the rough surface, with both marking the product as an industrial paper rather than a substrate

[11] Munsell, *Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making*.

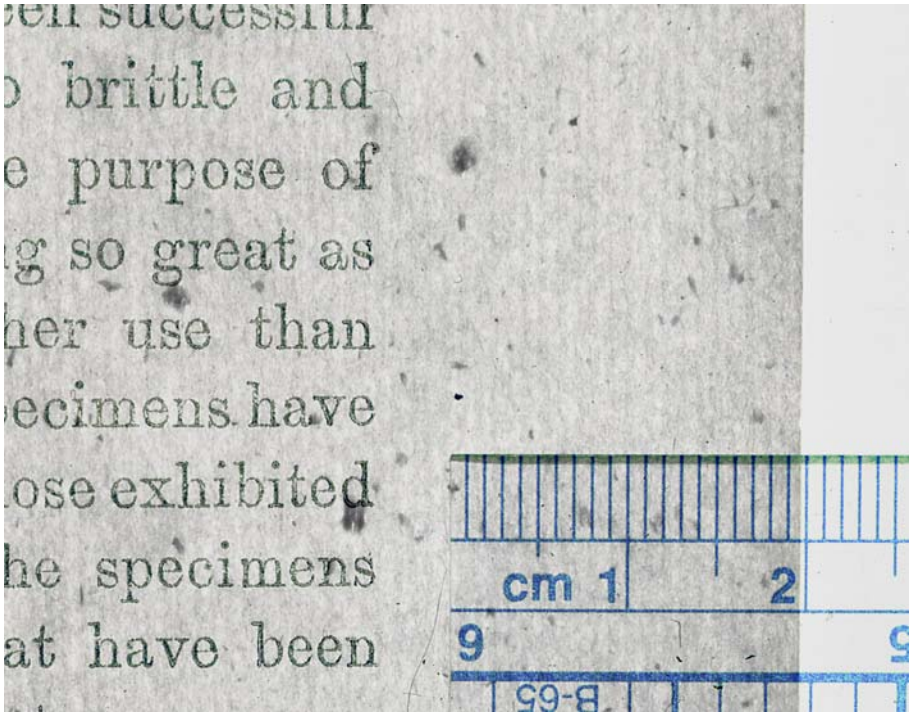

Fig. 4.5. Striations on straw paper manufactured by John Ames

for conveying texts. The inventor John Ames may have begun producing straw in 1849. His public report of producing straw paper by machine in the 1850s may have stimulated Shryock to write in 1866 the history of his own earlier efforts, thereby substantiating his own claim to early straw paper manufacture. Ames' sample from 1856 appears translucent, soft yellow, with laid ribs (fig. 4.5).[12] The transparency of the paper caused bleed through of ink on the verso of the printed side, although the printer pressed the type more gently into the paper's surface. The vertical striations of Ames's paper measured about twenty-five wires to the inch, or almost twice as many as the 1843 newspaper's fainter lines.[13]

[12] John Ames straw paper sample, Munsell, *Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making*. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.
[13] Discolorations in the paper shown in *Figure 4.5* are due to foxing, a common flaw in old papers that can be traced to the reactivation of molds present at the time of production.

In the years between the production of the two papers, dandy rolls came into vogue, allowing papermakers to press watermarks and a laid texture into machine-made paper to emulate the laid finish of hand processes. After 1820, but before about 1840, a laid finish could only be made by a vatman, coucher, and layer working by hand. Developed in England in 1839, dandy rolls were imported into America until 1847. Only at mid-century did domestic manufacturers finally succeed at making their own machine wires and dandy rolls.[14]

Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia

A second example of straw paper in an erotic publication proves strikingly similar to that of the Ames sample. In a rebound copy of *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia*, discussed in detail in chapter six, explicit engravings bound in as two of eight illustrations in the copy of that book held by the American Antiquarian Society include straw paper (fig. 4.6).[15] The noted English nineteenth-century erotica bibliographer Henry Spencer Ashbee identified numerous religiously themed books among those considered in his day to be indecent or obscene. His listings included few works deriding Mormons or Quakers, with the majority of titles trading in libels against organized religion involving the Roman Catholic Church. No friend of Catholicism himself, Ashbee devoted substantial portions of his erotica bibliographies to anti-Catholic literature.

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[14] Weeks, *History of Paper-Manufacturing*, 218.

[15] *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia: Being the Intrigues and Amours of a Jesuit and a Nun: Developing the Ppogress [sic] of Seduction of a Highly Educated Young Lady, Who Became, by the Foulest Sophistry and Treachery, the Victim of Debauchery and Libertinism* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith & Co. [Frederic A. Brady], [1854]; held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society. The title pages of the two known American imprints of this work spell the main character's name incorrectly as "Sanfroid," although he is, in fact, Sainfroid. This dissertation employs the intended spelling of the title.

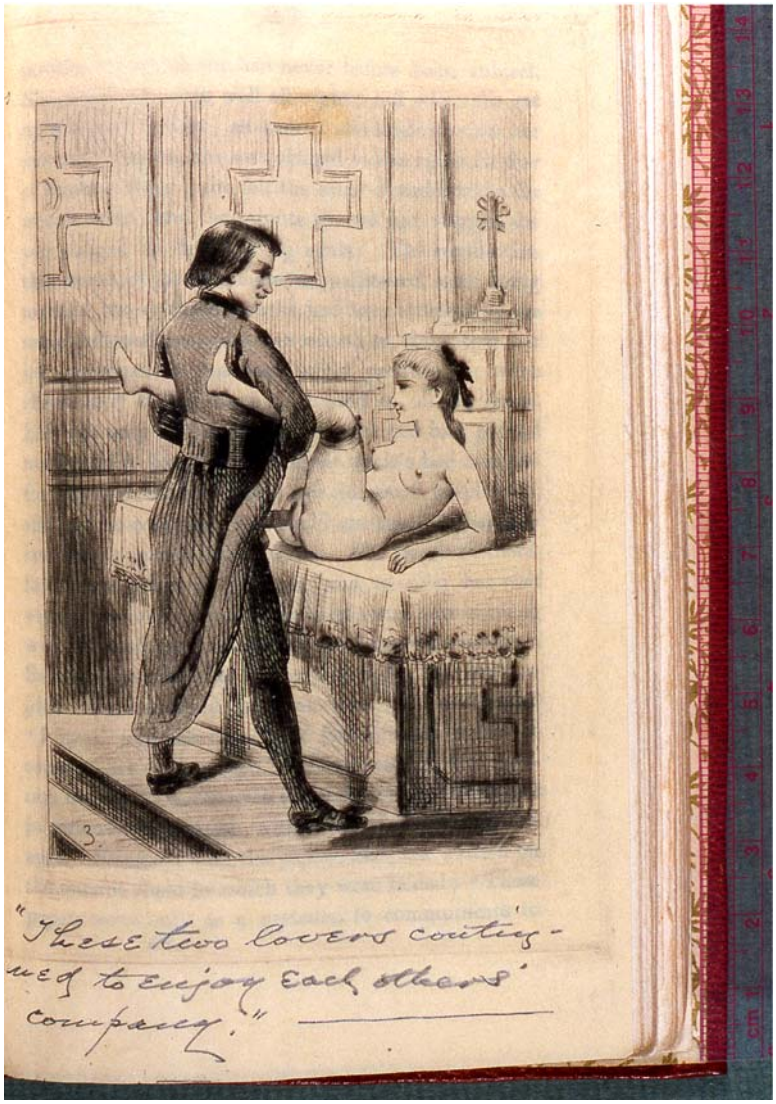

Fig. 4.6. *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* (185-), copperplate engraving

Americans published an astonishing assortment of anti-Catholic literature during the nineteenth century. Starting in the 1830s, masses of material became available as books, newspaper articles, pamphlets, and broadsides. Purported autobiographies of escaped nuns or former clergymen and excerpts from instructions to priests in conducting auricular confession promised to reveal secrets of groups that many Jacksonian Americans considered anti-democratic. David Brion Davis critiques the popular literature

that swelled up in opposition to subversive societies in antebellum America, writing, "Perversion of the sexual instinct seemed inevitably to accompany religious error."[16] More broadly, novels helped communicate fictive information to receptive readers who consumed anti-Catholic literature as well as treatises and sermons by Protestant clergy who denounced "Romish" practices. From Maria Monk exposés to a controversial translation by Protestant missionaries of Chinese anti-Christian slanders, many of the anti-Catholic publications in nineteenth-century America comprised an everyman's erotica widely available throughout all levels of society. These publications walked a line between informing readers and becoming themselves illicit texts.

Books like *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* relied upon a consensus of possibility to sustain a book's non-pornographic identity. A fictionalized account of historical figures, the narrative's relationship to actual events helped readers to justify strident anti-Catholic biases. Such books pushed erotic content beyond revelations of corrupt convent life into a sphere of informational entertainment especially sought after in the nativist climate of the antebellum period. Catholicism loomed as a foreign threat landed on American shores. Associating leaders of the Catholic faith with lechery and beastly sexual practices discredited a potentially powerful enemy of transparent, republican society. The choice of a straw substrate for an image portraying sexual license in *Figure 4.6* offers an ironic comment about domestic materials as a foundation for bringing to light the immorality of the Catholic menace.

The book's eight illustrations can be separated into four different substrates, with an artistic style and paper type consistent within each pair. Chapter six analyzes the

[16] David Brion Davis, "Some Themes of Counter-Subversion: An Analysis of Anti-Masonic, Anti-Catholic, and Anti-Mormon Literature," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (Sept. 1960): 205-224, quote from 216.

resonance between the material form and contents of these illustrations. Both straw paper engravings depict a swarthy priest sexually involved with a light-skinned female penitent. With straw paper less flexible than typical copperplate substrates, the engraver appears to have simplified another image. The lack of significant delicate shading matches the capabilities of a straw substrate for pulling ink from engraved areas of the plate. The engraving style almost seems to presume that a rougher type of paper would be employed, although it is impossible to tell whether such truly was the case.

Matthias Koops asserted that French printers preferred straw paper for copperplate engraving, but those claims must be evaluated carefully. Like many entrepreneurs, Koops proved to be as much of a booster as an inventor.[17] Engravers typically chose a high bulk, unsized paper with significant rag content. These features produced superior results, best withstanding the intense pressure of being crushed into the fine grooves of a plate while completely capturing ink in recessed areas. It is highly unlikely that most engravers would have chosen paper with a significant amount of straw for such a labor-intensive and demanding process as intaglio printing. While strong, straw fibers were not as resilient as cotton or linen.

Except for the lack of striations in the paper upon which the illustration was printed, the yellow tone and translucent features bear a striking resemblance to the paper produced by Ames. The date of the printing likely is contemporary with the mid-1850s, or approximately the same time as the text block. Although the paper contains no dandy roll marks, it easily could have been manufactured by Ames. By removing the dandy roll from his papermaking apparatus, Ames easily could have erased the identifying striations

[17] Matthias Koops, *Historical Account of Substances which have been used to describe events and to convey ideas, from the earliest date to the invention of paper* (London: Printed By T. Burton, 1800).

found on other paper produced at his mill. The similarity of the two papers and the lack of other comparable straw paper efforts tend to support the conclusion that an American, and probably John Ames, produced the paper for two of these highly-charged erotic illustrations. Other features of the illustrations and the participation of a reader in creating the version of the copy of *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* held by the American Antiquarian Society are discussed later in this dissertation.

Both *The New York Sporting Whip* and *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* traded on demand for social information that purported to judge malefactors while actually allowing readers to enjoy the spectacle of sexual infraction. Mass-produced newspapers and handcrafted intaglio prints occupy two ends of the printing processes spectrum, yet from them can be drawn examples of an important alternative papermaking technology and of erotic print. Similar in being disregarded by historians, pragmatic papermaking techniques and illicit publications reveal important aspects of American technological practice and print culture.

Chapter Five

The Paper and Color of American Erotica

> The Harpers felt sure that by issuing the best, and only the best, English novels at a low price, they would not only meet a real want on the part of the public, but in great measure supersede the "yellow covers," with all their pernicious influences.[1]
>
> — James D. McCabe, Jr. (1870)

A closed book lying on a table, unmarked at the spine or cover, may yet hint at its content. A classroom exercise devised by D.F. McKenzie teaches students to consider the historical associations of characteristics such as shape, thickness, and type of paper to the uses of books. Sheets of paper doubled to make a large folio suggest a presentation publication, perhaps a Bible. Halved again, the square shape of a quarto reminds one of a medieval treatise or modern instructional book. Folded a third time, the familiar contour of a novel appears. Forms hint at the materials from which books have been made, the technical and economic influences bearing upon production, and the relationship that publishers facilitated between the books they sold and the individuals buying, observing, and appraising those publications. They became a code exchanged between sellers and buyers, symbols in an implicit bargain guaranteeing the content of a work and ability to enable a reader's experience.

Publishers signaled their wares through many binding styles, each representing an attempt to initiate a relationship between readers and a book. The papers inside of books also shaped consumer perceptions in ways too subtle to trace except through their association with non-rag production practices, lowered costs, and national production

[1] James D. McCabe, Jr. on the success of the Library of Select Novels, first issued in 1842, in *Great Fortunes, and How They Were Made; or the Struggles and Triumphs of our Self-Made Men* (1870; reprint, Cincinnati: E. Hannaford & Company, 1872), 373.

styles. Publishers selected papers and applied colors to the production of illicit reading materials always with an eye toward marketing finished products. Technical practices associated with bindery work, paper production, and the availability of colorants played a role in the prevalence of yellow wrappers, as well as the varied forms that erotica took in the marketing strategies of erotica publishers.

The physical structures of books embody combinations of technical possibilities, consumer expectations, trade relationships, and publisher calculations about the marketability of products. Printed erotica exists at the juncture of technological and cultural practices, but the relationship of technological development to the content carried by print is not straightforward. Abundant paper in a variety of grades encouraged publishers to experiment with different bindings, from interchangeable casings to colorful wrappers. Describing sporting publications by a color references their relationship to an ephemeral binding style and presumes easy recognition of indecent literature.

Collapsing varied practices into one color and binding style makes the strategies of publishers seem monolithic and their access to the printing industry's wealth of color developments limited. In fact, they were not. Erotic publications exemplify the intersection of commerce and publishing-related technologies in ways beyond a simple linkage of yellow wrappers with illicit content. The color of erotica bears a strong relationship to the material constraints and possibilities that publishers faced.[2]

As bibliographers have found, generalizations can transform an accretion of facts

[2] The uses of color in art and for prints bear many similarities, especially in the need for historicizing the relationship of color techniques to technological development. The employment of color in painting cannot be explained except by an understanding of the historical relationship of artistic expression and science, as noted by R.D. Harley, *Artists' Pigments, c. 1600-1835: A Study in English Documentary Sources* (New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company, Inc., 1970) and the highly readable essays of Philip Ball, *Bright Earth: Art and the Invention of Color* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001).

about singular objects into manageable and historically meaningful information. Each copy of a book provides a level of specificity that can be layered with that of others to generate categories helpful in describing the forms taken by texts. Simplifications disguise micro-level variations that reveal material constraints, marketing strategies, and workplace practices, however. Joseph A. Dane remarks on the tension that exists between the study of material objects and of abstract intellectual products. "How do we move from the level of the singular book (or even the book fragment) to discussions of that ominously capitalized Book in general?" he asks. Studying American books considered indecent offers a production-based structure and conceptual boundaries that help bridge "the gap between material and textual levels" against which Dane warns.[3]

Racy publications through the early 1870s exemplify connections among color, production, and consumption. Historians should be concerned about learning how the technological choices of publishers related to perceptions about the forms of specific types of books. The first step in this process is to learn how publishers, as market intermediaries, made use of technical advances as they coordinated the production of books to maximize the interest of potential buyers and ensure sales. Adding color to a wrapper through dyeing or hand coloring drew the attention of buyers. Such a strategy produced the greatest effect for publications sold in public locations. Where a large number of people passed by during the course of a day, casual interest might be transformed into a commercial transaction.

The physical characteristics of American editions of books noted by Henry Spencer Ashbee provide markers for the types of technological practices and business

[3] Joseph A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 4.

strategies followed by publishers. Papers and colors used in American imprints of titles listed by Ashbee can be interpreted in light of nineteenth-century manufacturing and publishing practices. Clusters of styles linking physical forms to the content of specific books can be discerned.

Along the way to boosting the production of printing papers, manufacturers produced a large amount of second-quality substrates. Colorants minimized blemishes and allowed defective paper to be sold for a profit rather than recycled as waste. The coloring of paper challenged papermakers, who were forced to balance increasingly complicated chemical processes, variances in the grade of materials, and imperatives to keep machines running with continual supplies of pulp. At the same time, it created an outlet for low-quality substrates otherwise unfit to be made into white printing paper. The bright hues of book wrappers related directly to the introduction of colorants and the availability of low-quality papers, especially those made from straw.

Increased access to colorants affected the types of inks available for hand coloring and printing, and publishers integrated colored inks, as well as various types of paper into their marketing strategies. As outlined in the following chapter, the introduction of lithography stimulated and took advantage of color capabilities, allowing publishers to create more variety in illustrations. Integrated into books, illustrations challenged the meanings of, and promoted the consumption of, the books into which they were placed.

Appendix B contains about 130 works listed by Henry Spencer Ashbee for which American imprints can be documented. Ashbee noted just more than ninety titles in an extended section devoted to American publications and a small number of additional citations in the three volumes of his bibliography. About seventy additional works that

Ashbee did not list as American publications were also studied in this dissertation. They are selected for their apparent overlap with the books that Ashbee considered indecent and their occurrence in bibliographies, publisher advertisements, prosecution records, published contemporary sources, and trade directories through 1890. Some evidence about physical features can be drawn from various publishing sources to supplement descriptions of those that still exist. Therefore, *Appendix B* offers a conservative compilation of the titles of indecent American books through 1890.[4]

Bindings

Critiquing a book's appearance creates a distance between the reader and the text. In order to avoid obtrusive criticism of a book's form as readers took in fictive information and semi-erotic narratives, publications followed conventions about the physical forms appropriate to their purposes and distribution patterns. At the same time, consumers made use of print in ways other than the consumption of text. Beautifully bound volumes displayed on a bookshelf in a parlor emphasized middle-class values and the home as a center of culture; fine bindings in a gentleman's library indicated exclusivity and the diversion of wealth to the leisurely pursuit of knowledge.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, American printers issued books with temporary covers as protection prior to more permanent binding. Sold in sheets, folded into quires, or sewn together lightly, most books were expected to be clad

[4] Books not listed in *Appendix B* were included in this dissertation if at least two (and usually three) sources pointed toward American production. This standard allowed the exclusion of books imported and sold without domestic alteration. Employing a wider net, Marcus A. McCorison, former librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, has identified nearly 400 items published in the United States through 1876. His list includes primarily books but also periodicals, prints, and other publications. McCorison, "Risqué Literature Published in America before 1877," 2005, BibSite, The Bibliographical Society of America <http://www.bibsocamer.org/BibSite/McCorison/Risque.pdf>.

eventually in leather or with boards. Buyers arranged for the assembly of their books into bound volumes, interceding between printers and binders. At the same time, however, American printers had established a custom of providing certain types of books in wrappers, according to Frank L. Schick. Sermons, almanacs, some government documents, and children's chapbooks exhibited either self-wrappers printed on the same sheets as the text and folded into a covering, or as separate papers attached to the outside of a text block. Nineteenth-century wrappers represented the evolution of previous practices rather than revolutionary developments.[5]

During the 1820s, Americans began gluing cloth rather than paper to the boards that served as solid book covers, importing dyed English fabric for the purpose. Before that time, publishers issued popular books either with paper-covered boards or sheets folded in, with the gatherings quickly threaded together at three places toward the spine. "Stabbed" and covered with temporary wrappers, the books could be read and thrown away. Readers might themselves take books to a bindery for the addition of a leather binding or embossing to distinguish the book and make its form more permanent.[6]

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[5] Frank L. Schick, *The Paperbound Book in America: The History of Paperbacks and Their European Background* (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1958), 38-42. See also Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, Lawrence C. Wroth, and Rollo G. Silver, *The Book in America*, 2nd ed. (New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1952), 25.

[6] Although Americans pioneered many aspects of bookbinding machinery innovation, American book cloths were imported from England until almost the end of the nineteenth century, according to Joseph W. Rogers, "The Rise of American Edition Binding," *Bookbinding in America: Three Essays*, ed. H. Lehmann-Haupt (Portland, Me.: The Southworth-Anthoensen Press, 1941). Articles by Rogers, Hannah D. French, and Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt give an excellent overview of historical bookbinding processes. For a study of the relationship of British bookcloth makers to the American market, see "Winterbottom's major role in American bookcloth production," in William Tomlinson and Richard Masters, *Bookcloth 1823-1980: A study of early use and the rise of manufacture, Winterbottom's dominance of the trade in Britain and America, production methods and costs, and the identification of qualities and designs* (Cheshire, England: Dorothy Tomlinson, 1996). The latter volume is particularly valuable for its tipped-in cloth samples. Descriptions of bookbinding practices in major firms can be found in C.T. Hinckley, *A Day at The Bookbindery of Lippincott, Grambo, & Co.* (1852; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1988); Edward Walker, *The Art of Book-Binding, Its Rise and Progress; Including a Descriptive Account of the New York Book-Bindery* and *The Great New-York Book-Bindery*, Paul S. Koda, ed. (New Castle, Del.: Oak

Newspaper publishers in the 1830s sought to enlarge the market for their products, with the effect of altering the expectations of customers for books finished in a permanent manner. Spurred by the higher costs of purchasing and operating cylinder presses, publishers of newspapers explored binding styles appropriate to ephemeral print distributed through channels outside of bookstores. Boys hawked to passersby street supplements that differed only in their covers from variants that traveled through the mail. "For the street sale, the proprietors put out an edition in paper covers in somewhat lurid color. Another edition went through the mails without covers, thus maintaining the pretext that these books were really newspapers," writes John Tebbel.[7]

Books and newspapers mingled together, with colored wrappers rather than hard bindings increasingly associated in the public eye with popular literature. Chosen at a glance from among other offerings on a busy street, books with colored paper covers appealed to impulsive tastes. They also promised access to print rushed to market for a fraction of the price of a hardbound book from an established bookstore. Books advertised by publishers at 75 cents to $1.25 remained beyond the purse of many waged workers during the antebellum period, who earned perhaps $1 a day, as Ronald J. Zboray has noted.[8] However, newspapers at 6 cents and books in wrappers at 12-1/2 or 25 cents, and especially those shared with friends, family, or co-workers, were affordable.

Prepared cases and the stamping of patterns into book cloths made it possible for consumers to obtain mass produced hard bindings. Case bindings and power presses for

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Knoll Books, 1984); and *The Making of the Book; A Sketch of the Book-Binding Art*, Paul S. Koda, ed. (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1986).

[7] John Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, Vol. 1, *The Creation of an Industry 1630-1865* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1972), 243.

[8] Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 11. It is of interest, however, that the standard novel in England cost several times that of an American book, in terms of a workman's wages.

embossing became available during the 1830s, expanding the permanence of common books. Bindery workers prepared text blocks for insertion into prepared cases, and designs stamped onto dyed or printed cloth distinguished each firm's products.[9]

Generally, women sewed the gatherings into a single unit, and men hammered the text blocks into flat, easily opened units. A prepared binding, already covered in plain, patterned, or embossed cloth, then could be attached to the unit. The process enabled publishers to create house styles or to add ornamental touches to differentiate batches bound at different times. Hoisington & Trow took advantage of case binding to issue a portion of its press run for *Awful Disclosures* in an embossed cloth publisher's binding in 1836. The following year, Leavitt, Lord, & Co. and its co-publishers in Boston and Philadelphia issued *Further Disclosures* similarly bound, adding a paper label with the book's title pasted onto the spine, in a manner common at the time.[10]

From the publisher's perspective, hard bindings made shipping volumes to booksellers outside of local markets safer and less injurious to books. Postal officials, however, cited the harm that bound books caused to letters and other items during conveyance. Carrying books amounted to transporting "blocks of wood" that destroyed newspapers and correspondence. Private express companies conveyed goods from publishers to booksellers during much of the antebellum period for this reason.[11]

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[9] Frank Romer offers a general outline of American self-sufficiency after 1842 in the innovation of machines critical to bindery work. See "Pioneers in Bindery Production," in *100 Years of Books* (Jersey City, N.J.: The Davey Company, 1942), 18-23.

[10] Maria Monk, *Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, as exhibited in a narrative of her sufferings during a residence of five years as a novice, and two years as a black nun, in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery at Montreal* (New-York: Howe & Bates, 1836); and Maria Monk, *Further Disclosures by Maria Monk, concerning the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (New York: Published for Maria Monk, and sold by Leavitt, Lord, & Co.; Boston: Crocker & Brewster; Philadelphia: Desilver, Thomas, & Co., and sold by the booksellers generally throughout the United States, 1837)

[11] Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Mere Merchandise or Vessels of Culture? Books in the Mail, 1792-1942," *PBSA* 82 (1988): 169-200.

By the time of the Maria Monk scandal in the mid-1830s, numerous large firms issued books in publisher bindings.[12] Some consumers still bound their copies of *Awful Disclosures* and *Further Disclosures* after purchase, as evidenced by the stab holes or trimming inaccuracies on certain copies. Making the book's binding permanent instead of allowing it to remain in temporary covers solidified the physical presence of the text, allowing it to be passed without damage to friends or displayed upon a bookshelf. Paper spine labels ensured easy identification of a book among the many presumed kept in the homes of middle-class readers. In the 1830s, embossed titles superceded printed labels.

Large capital expenditures and volume printing typified the production of anti-Catholic books throughout the nineteenth-century. The technologies that manufactured both paper and illustrations often were among the best of the day. Protestant publishers promoting the word of God in print pioneered mass production and specialization early in the nineteenth century, as did entrepreneurs taking advantage of widespread anti-Catholic sentiment to sell publicly acceptable erotic publications. The case bindings of many antebellum books of the latter type reflected advanced techniques that set apart the genre from more ephemeral publications.

Even in their incarnations as reprints, anti-Catholic titles tended to maintain a marketing edge because of the willingness of publishers to select production materials processed with the latest technological advancements. Ideologically motivated publications, such as those focused upon exposing alleged abuses by Catholic clergy or free love books issued by Calvin Blanchard, more often featured bindings that set apart their textual content. Case bindings for Maria Monk-related titles in the 1830s and Calvin Blanchard's distinctive embossed cloth editions in the 1850s and 1860s fixed text into

[12] Schick, *Paperbound Book in America*, 43.

permanent forms, intentionally linking a publisher with the messages that his books carried. Colored cloth and embossed covers connected books to specific publishers, allowing consumers to tell at a glance the origins of a volume.[13]

An iconoclast, Blanchard reprinted Rousseau and Paine in an age less radical than that of the nation's founders. Classical erotica, such as *The Satyricon* of Titus Petronius Arbiter and Bocaccio's *Decameron,* peppered his publishing list. Self-publishing afforded Blanchard the opportunity to distribute his own essays, which advocated free love as the "antidote," for societal ills and encouraged Americans to rally against the intrusion of moral or government authorities into personal matters. Greed, wrote Blanchard, caused corruption in government and the valuation of property over human happiness. He claimed to have the cure for the perversions of human impulses, evident in ancient history and his own time. The perfect society would be communist in its attitude toward economic resources, social goods and sexual behaviors in his utopia:

> The interests of labor, capital, and skill, were so adjusted as to completely harmonize, and perfectly secure and sustain each other.
>
> Wealth was a thousand times more plenty than it now is, ten thousand million times more valuable, and perfectly secure to its individual owners. …
>
> All the men and women were lovers, freely luxuriating in each other's embraces; love was universally reciprocal; it was perfect love; its extreme pleasure was ten times longer and stronger, and proportionably [sic] more delightful than at present; it was real enchantment.[14]

Blanchard issued his books in easily identified brown and purple bindings. *Figure 5.1* shows, at left, a blind embossed, diagonal ribbon pattern cloth cover from *A Votary of Pleasure*). The three items shown on right include gold lettering and tooling, especially

[13] Book cloths and their decoration can aid in dating books, as detailed by Sue Allen and Charles Gullans, *Decorated Cloth in America: Publishers' Bindings, 1840-1910* (Los Angeles: University of California-Los Angeles, 1994).
[14] Calvin Blanchard, "Good" in Petronius Arbiter, *The Satyricon; or, Trebly Voluptuous* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1866"), 3, held at AAS and by author.

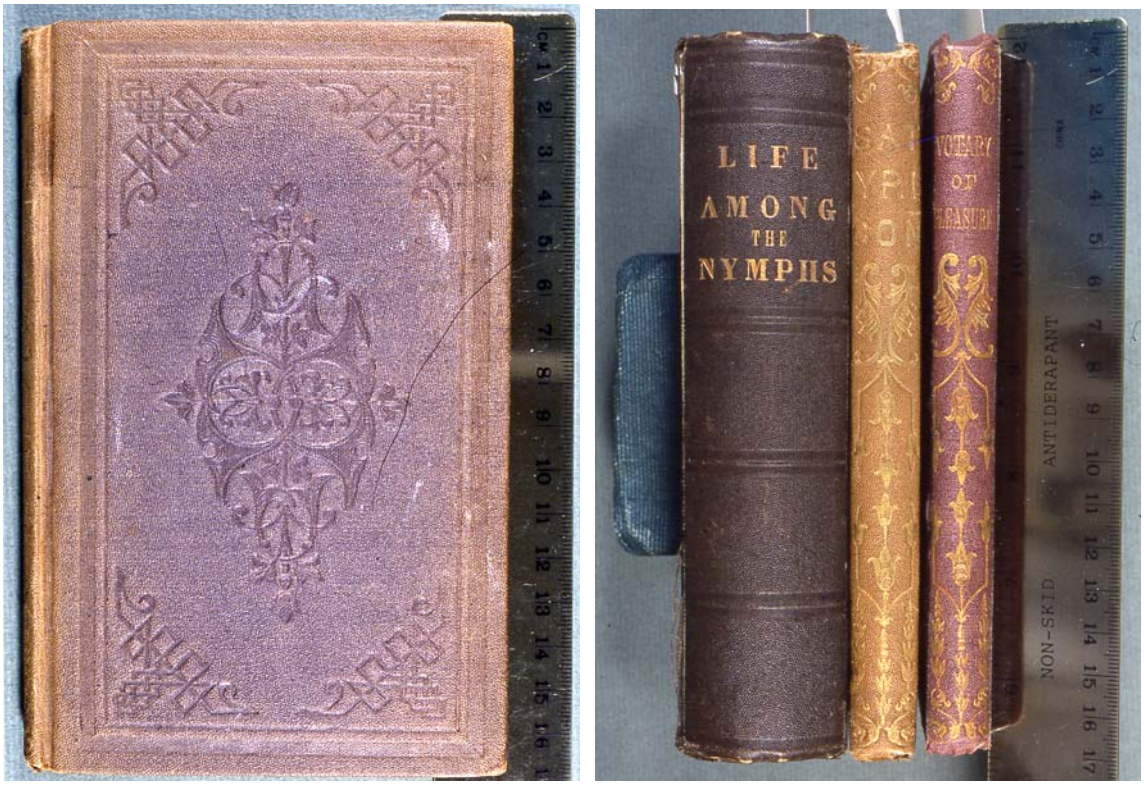

Fig. 5.1. Calvin Blanchard bindings (1864-1867)

on their spines. Typical of Blanchard's offerings that have survived are a blind embossed brown binding (*Life Among the Nymphs*), a sunned purple spine faded to a warm yellow (*The Satyricon*), and a purple fading toward brownish-maroon (*Votary of Pleasure*).[15]

The sturdier brown binding encased a volume containing a mixture of previously published Blanchard works and new texts, with illustrations printed on yellow paper located between the variously paged sections. Embraced by elaborate cloth bindings and ornamented with detailed illustrations on yellow paper, his books presented a vague

[15] Calvin Blanchard, *Life Among the Nymphs: A New Excursion through the Empire of Venus* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1867), containing Blanchard's other works *The Art of Real Pleasure* (New York: 1864), *Human Nature Unveiled* (New York: 1865), and *Secret History of a Votary of Pleasure* (New York: 1866), held at AAS; Petronius Arbiter, *The Satyricon; or, Trebly Voluptuous* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1866." Vulgar Era), held at AAS and by author; and Blanchard, S*ecret History of a Votary of Pleasure: His Own Confessions* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1866), held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

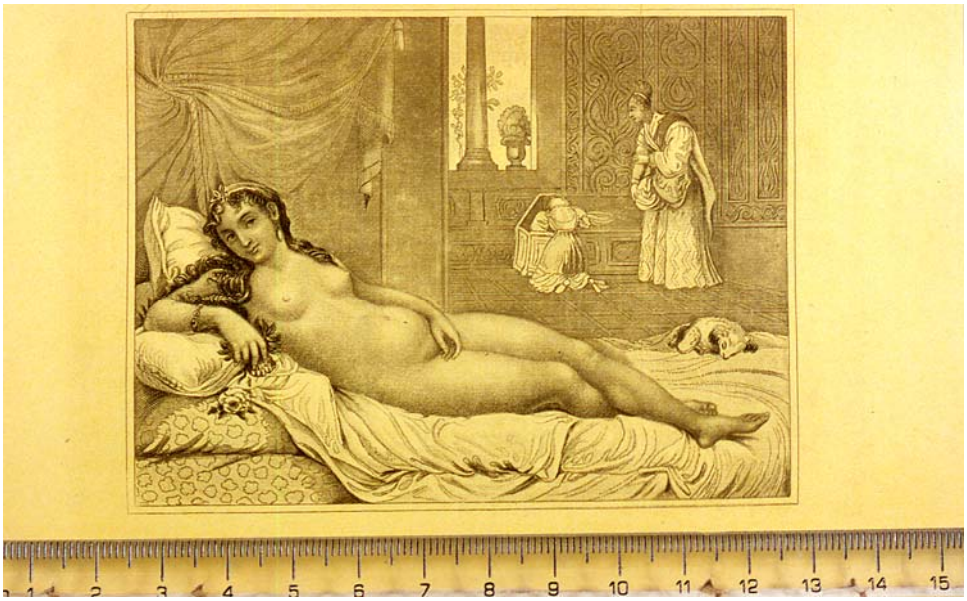

Fig. 5.2. *Life Among the Nymphs* (1867), illustration on yellow paper

social manifesto that pushed forward a free love agenda. Blanchard incorporated a similar thickness of paper into those three books published during the 1860s as that used for many literary works of the day.[16]

The merging of classical erotica, political criticism, and poetry set apart Blanchard's books from street literature and aligned his approach to that of literary publishers. Publishers regularly incorporated paper dyed yellow as inserted illustrations, although to a much lesser extent than those on white paper, with lower-quality straw paper for illustration, fly leaf, and wrapper paper for many books. *Appendix A* shows this to be true of illustrations in Calvin Blanchard's *Life Among the Nymphs* (fig. 5.2).[17]

[16] Business records for Ticknor and Fields from 1832 to 1858 confirm that the firm selected mostly fifty-pound paper, calculated upon a 24" x 38" basis weight, for many of its publications at mid-century. Warren S. Tryon and William Charvat, *The Cost Books of Ticknor and Fields and Their Predecessors, 1832-1858* (New York: The Bibliographical Society of America, 1949). The reported paper sizes in have been converted to into approximate pounds per standard sheet in calculations for this dissertation (see *Appendix A*). From the records of this firm's highly rationalized operations, it becomes clear that the actual sizes of paper varied tremendously, that reported sizes in printing manuals are merely the most common of those offered by manufacturers.

[17] Blanchard, *Life Among the Nymphs*. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

The varied qualities found in different papers, and particularly those dyed and used for illustrations or wrappers, suggest that historians should make greater efforts to study the use of straw fibers in papermaking. The prevalence of straw in dyed papers in Blanchard's publications appear little different than those one might expect from publishers of cheap and medium-level literature, although his text papers and bindings were more similar to those of standard literary works.

Paper in Indecent Books

The paper selections of erotic publishers paralleled those of major firms, as well as publishers who specialized in cheap reprinted novels. Following the norms of the domestic papermaking industry, publishers of indecent books included only machine-made paper for the half century after the mid-1820s. Texts and illustrations printed during the age of mechanization were characteristic of industrial processes rather than small-scale handcrafts.

On a more detailed level, it can be seen that publishers managed paper selection and the benefits of colorants to most profitably approach potential buyers of erotica. The availability of certain types of paper and colorants affected the physical forms of print and the marketing strategies of publishers, shaping the social context for the consumption of racy and obscene literature from the first quarter of the century to the last.

Publishers began integrating machine-made paper into their books during the 1830s, following the same trajectory that described American papermaking. For both mainstream and illicit literature publishers, by the 1840s wove finish paper made by machines represented the norm. Substrates from the 1840s to the 1860s reflected the

greater variety of paper qualities on the market. Mid-century printings of books balanced relative cost, consumer expectations, and the wide variance of paper actually available. Extant titles feature a somewhat greater range of acceptable paper qualities than non-erotic books of the same period collected by major institutions, with the exception of a more conspicuous presence of shives.

Erotica publishers may have cut their costs and raised their profits by accepting paper of lower quality. They did so with an awareness that customers increasingly had a choice about which version of a book to buy, due to the rapid pirating and reprinting of books in the keenly competitive American publishing industry. Furthermore, the invisibility of paper in the eyes of consumers seems almost a truism when talking about erotica. Yet content always balances precariously with reader perceptions. Printing dominates a page only when the page itself meets an expected level of unobtrusiveness.

Books published before the mid-1820s exhibited the chain and wire marks of laid paper, with varying thicknesses consistent with manual production. *Aristotle's Master-Piece*, *A Sentimental Journey*, and *Memoirs of a Woman of Leisure* (known as *Fanny Hill*) appeared in octodecimo and duodecimo formats but were produced with handmade paper. Although each of these works derived intellectually from England, by 1830 each had been printed clandestinely at least once in America. The surviving copies and remnants examined of *Aristotle's Master-Piece*, *Sentimental Journey*, and *Fanny Hill* contained no watermarks.[18]

[18] These three works are discussed in detail in chapter six. Additionally, the microfilmed version of *The Amorous Songster* (New-York: Printed for the Sporting Club, 1800) shows a depth of type impression and visible paper texture consistent with handmade paper of that date. *The Amorous Songster* is available through the *Early American Imprint* microfilms, first series (Evans 36834).

Only about one-fourth of American handmade paper probably contained watermarks; nevertheless, bibliographical scholars have spent a great deal of effort attempting to track watermarks to specific manufacturers as part of identifying the production sequences for publications. Selecting paper that lacked a watermark made it less likely that the names of paper manufacturers or those doing business with specific vendors could be discovered. Quite possibly an intentional strategy to avoid detection, the exclusion of paper with identifying features typified substrates in commercial, domestically-produced American erotica.

Several well-known publications dating from before 1840 closely followed innovations in papermaking. An 1825 memoir intended for blackmail purposes and mass marketed anti-Catholic works associated with the Maria Monk scandal of the 1830s mirrored the turn toward machine production during those decades. The chronological divide between paper made by hand and by machine holds among publishers in these books, as it does generally for American paper of the nineteenth century.

The first known American reprint of *Memoirs of Harriette Wilson* presents a transition between the hand and machine eras of papermaking. Published just after the 1825 original appeared in London as *Harriette Wilson's Memoirs of Herself and Others*, that American version narrative detailed Harriette Dubuchet's thinly veiled revelations of her amours with some of the most powerful men in England. Seizing upon the power of the pen to bolster her financial circumstances, she reportedly blackmailed numerous men by sending the manuscript accompanied by a note demanding £200 in exchange for the subject's excision from her narrative. Her strategy incensed the Duke of Wellington, who

was reputed to have returned the manuscript to his former lover with the famous recommendation that she "Publish and be damned." [19]

Issued as a four-volume novel in 1825 and 1826 in the United States, the work reappeared in an abridged form in the 1840s, as well. The unillustrated 1820s edition used fairly well formed rag paper that contains occasional orange-brown shives and few intrusions. Blue fibers, visible with rudimentary magnification, attest to the incorporation of small amounts of vat dyed rags to the bleached stock. These permanently dyed rags could not themselves be bleached white, but their persistent color added to the finished quality of a paper. In both mechanized production and the judicious selection of blue rags for production, the technical prowess of the papermaker can be seen. Papermakers often added small amounts of bluing to increase the perception of whiteness in finished paper, but that process did not create single blue fibers. On the other hand, small quantities of blue rags could achieve a similar effect after their maceration, separation, and distribution as fibers throughout a pulp.

The disrupted surfaces on certain outer portions of leaves suggest the deckle of a hand mold, but such rough edges were not uncommon on paper produced by cylinder and Fourdrinier machines during the early decades of mechanization. The varying leaf thicknesses leave open the possibility of hand processing, though the substrate departs from manual production characteristics. *Memoirs of Harriette Wilson* lacks a laid texture or the noticeable round, thin spots caused by water droplets falling from another mold

[19]Harriette Wilson, *Memoirs of Harriette Wilson*, 4 vols. in 2 (Philadelphia: Printed for the Purchaser, 1825-1826), held at LOC. The later copy is *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion* (New York: Published and for sale by the Booksellers, 1845), held at AAS. (Another version is Harriette Wilson, *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion* (New York: [s.n.], 1852), also held at AAS.) Wilson's attempts to exploit her connections extended to the highest levels of British society. See Frances Wilson, *The Courtesan's Revenge: Harriette Wilson, the Woman Who Blackmailed the King* (London: Faber, 2003).

onto an adjacent sheet. These “vat man’s tears” were unexceptional in handmade paper but much less frequent in mechanized paper.

More tellingly, a distinct wove pattern unusual in mold-made paper can be seen. Although wove might be achieved (albeit uncommonly) through hand production, the breadth of the thin areas can be distinguished easily from vat man’s tears. Sizeable thin areas in the 1825-1826 edition indicate that an early papermaking machine produced the paper. The uneven application of fibers to the wire belt rather than the inadequate dispersal of the fibers caused by unpracticed mold shaking more adequately explain such mars. A skilled craftsman would have adjusted the amount of pulp in the mold and reformed the paper accordingly.

Papermaking machines played a significant role in the mass production of Maria Monk exposés during the 1830s. Improvements to the more affordable cylinder machine, and the domestic production of Fourdrinier-type machines that were cheaper than those imported from England, brought mechanization within the grasp of American papermakers. By 1830, workers producing paper on continual process machines rather than in hand molds predominantly fulfilled demand for printing paper.

Backed by publishers willing to invest in stereotyped plates for texts and steel engraving or lithography for illustrations, editions of *Awful Disclosures* and *Further Disclosures* in 1836 and later reached a mass market that would have been unthinkable less than two decades earlier. Wire seam shadows present on copies of those books in 1836 verify that at least two of their main publishers brought large editions to market aided by machine-made paper capabilities.[20]

[20] Monk, *Awful Disclosures* (1836), held at LOC, contains the seam mark on text pages 85-85; and Monk, *Further Disclosures* (1837), held at LOC, has a seam mark on text pages 59/60. Type wear patterns, the

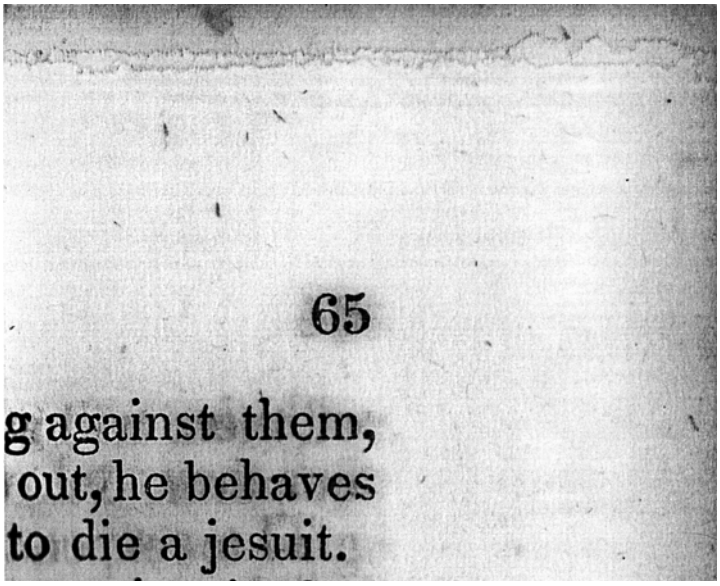

Fig. 5.3. Shives in *A Master-Key to Popery* (1833)

The ready availability of machine-made paper made it possible to print large editions, but it cannot be determined whether a cylinder or a Fourdrinier machine supplied the bulk of the papers for the aforementioned books. The uniformity of thickness and sheet formation in both the Maria Monk books and of American reprints of Anthony Gavin's eighteenth-century exposés of confessional practices indicate machine production. Most were printed on paper with high rag content and were relatively free of a notable presence of shives.

Figure 5.3 shows the prevalence of small to medium brown shives on the upper portion of a page selected from an 1833 copy of *A Master-Key to Popery* printed in

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rapid availability of these books at major urban outlets, and publisher bindings point toward cylinder press production of these books. On the other hand, point holes present in Rebecca Theresa Reed, *Six Months in a Convent, or, The Narrative of Rebecca Theresa Reed, Who was Under the Influence of the Roman Catholics about Two Years, and an Inmate of the Ursuline Convent on Mount Benedict, Charlestown, Mass., Nearly Six Months, in the Years 1831-32* (Boston: Russell, Odiorne & Metcalf, 1835), held by LOC and author. While type wear and other factors point toward production of the two early Maria Monk volumes on cylinder presses, production marks on a copy of the first edition of *Six Months in a Convent* indicate manufacture on a non-cylinder power press.

Cincinnati.[21] S.E. Wallington & Co. of Philadelphia originally published the book, copyrighting it in 1832. The following year, inland publisher A.F. Robinson reset the text, using Wallington's edition as a guide, and advertised the Cincinnati imprint as the "Second American Edition." The Cincinnati version added several items to Gavin's condemnation of confessional practices. The American edition summarized Protestant views of Roman Catholic beliefs in a factual but denunciatory style and included documents chosen to reflect extreme excommunications of apostates. Robinson made certain to attach important additions to the preface, revealing his strategy aimed at those who sought rational arguments against the spread of Catholicism:

> As a christian people, it becomes us to examine carefully the grounds of our belief, and to decide with due caution for ourselves, whether the doctrines and standards of faith proposed for our acceptance by any set of men, conform with those handed down to us by the fathers. By placing this book in the hands of the American reader, he will be enabled to compare it with the only safe rule of faith and practice, the blessed Gospel of Christ, which is all truth, purity, and wisdom, and cannot mislead.
>
> The American reader will also decide, whether the forms of the Roman catholic religion are suited to the circumstances of a republican people. If even the doctrines of that faith, were safe and pure, we cannot believe that the complicated machinery, the expensive and unmeaning parade, and the despotic principles of its church government, could ever be received into practice by the good sense of intelligent and free people.[22]

Nativists charged that followers of Roman Catholicism subverted a value fundamental to an individual's political and public standing in America. Robinson identified auricular confession as part of a threatening social apparatus, dangerous in its opaque complexity. At the same time, the form in which he conveyed that argument itself derived from the expansion and intensification of the industrializing American publishing trade.

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[21] Anthony Gavin, *A Master-Key to Popery: Giving a Full Account of All the Customs of the Priests and Friars, and the Rites and Ceremonies, of the Popish Religion* (Cincinnati: A.F. Robinson, 1833), held at LOC. Courtesy, Library of Congress.
[22] Gavin, *Master-Key to Popery* (1833), 11.

Publishers supplying books with strong ideological overtones particularly made efforts to make their publications permanent and attractive. In form and content, anti-Catholic books were acceptable in middle-class homes. Both pseudo-biographical narratives and historical critiques gained legitimacy in the eye of readers predisposed to view confessional practices with suspicion. Anti-Catholic literature expressed public taste for the fusion of entertainment and self-improvement literature as well as nativist sentiment. Assured of a strong return on their investment, publishers took advantage of the cost savings that resulted from volume production of such books. Sold through established trade channels and relatively uniform in their content across editions, anti-Catholic publications gained even more credence through their substantial physical forms and wide distribution through the shops of traditional booksellers.

Non-Rag Fibers

The processes of preparing pulps created color, and materials for papermaking encouraged a diversity of hues in finished products. The affect of a paper hints at the work techniques and fibers that created a furnish. Two titles published in the middle of the 1840s highlight distinctions between paper in commonly collected nineteenth-century books and lower quality paper made of poor rags or with noticeable amounts of adulterating fibers. Published by a vendor identified as “L. Terry” and copyrighted in Massachusetts by Irving & Co. in 1844, a Boston imprint of *Physiology of the Wedding Night* integrated numerous romantic vignettes into a text promoting the procreative aspects of the marriage union. Weaving together philosophy, scientific references, and moral admonitions, the stereotyped work offered enthusiastic prose, poems, and small

illustrations in support of the sexual and spiritual union of the matrimonial state. The text block contained both text and wood engravings printed by letterpress on a very good quality, fifty-pound aged white paper.[23]

That small marital guide's pages contrasts with an octavo abridged edition of *Harriette Wilson* for sale the following year. An 1845 New York version of *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion* contained wood engravings for the frontispieces and inserted illustrations. A vignette of Cupid approaching a langorously seated woman decorated the text's opening page. Rather than American-style numbers at the foot of the first page of each signature to aid in binding a book as in *Physiology of the Wedding Night*, *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion* followed the fading British fashion of using letters. The British style of penning a signature that matched the content, which focused on amours in English high society, and the book's origins in England.[24]

The publisher employed an off white, fifty-pound paper with abundant small brown shives for the text block. The condition of the text paper appears to indicate the addition of finely ground, bleached mechanical wood. Nudity conveyed through wall paintings, statuary, and a classically posed female figure in the inserted illustrations link artistic appreciation to voyeurism and seduction. The two illustrations cited in *Appendix A* showed a chemical brown tone characteristic of pulp from which chemicals have been insufficiently washed and that subsequently deteriorated.

A shrewd decision by the publisher distracted the attention of readers from the poor paper of the wrapper. Enveloping the text in illustrated covers both hid the paper quality and played upon the interests of Americans in national symbols. The blue, red,

[23] Charles Chabot [M. Octavius de St. Ernest, pseud.], *Physiology of the Wedding Night* (Boston: [s.n.], 1844), held at AAS.
[24] Wilson, *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion* (1845).

and black wrapper motif combined the symbolism of Republican ideology with amorous literature. A vibrant blue-and-red frame, topped by an eagle clutching a liberty banner, opened into a rectangular space for a wood engraving prepared for the publication.

The black center printing advertised the book's title, carved into an illustration of Cupid pulling back his bow. The block-printed frame, primarily in a geometric design, allowed the publisher to prepare many wrappers while leaving a blank center within which text-specific information for any book could be printed. Despite being printed with only light ink coverage onto weak, poorly formed, and off white book paper, the colorful wrapper served the publisher's purpose of distinguishing that book from the growing number of semi-erotic works available in the United States.

Wood and Straw Shives

Around 1850, escalating demand for paper and greater mechanization in America, England, and on the Continent clashed with more efficient use of materials by textile manufacturers and an insufficient stock of clean rags with fibers strong enough to be recycled into paper. American manufacturers clearly added straw, wood, and other materials to rag paper even before the rag crisis, however. Dilution of stock caused little comment in press reports about the trade, whether because of a widespread acceptance of the practice or secrecy on the part of mills. Paper samples from the 1840s through the 1860s contain material other than rags in amounts that would have been obvious to readers. The whiteness of paper distinguished the communication printed upon it, and extraneous materials subtly "colored" the perceptions of readers.

Many of the books surveyed in *Appendix A* have golden or light brown specks that can be identified as straw or light-colored wood. Other papers possess short brown fibers or bits that even without magnification resemble hemp or mechanical ground wood. Although it is not possible to accurately quantify non-rag components without destructive testing of these papers, the regularity of non-rag fibers discernible to the human eye exceeds that which can be expected normally from rag papers. Rather than a failure to clean rags thoroughly, abundant shives resulted from the intentional combination of rag stock with other materials.

Straw shives are more readily seen by the naked eye because they, like shives of esparto, reflect light readily. When touched, they feel rough; if pressed or extracted with a knife or other implement, their brittleness causes them to "tend to spring away from the needle or blade," according to F.D. Armitage. Their color may well appear like that of straw. Depending on the heat and abrasion from digestion, calendaring, or dry end processing, straw shives can take on darker colors as well. More intense processing at the dry end of a paper machine may color the specks dark brown or even black.[25]

Wood shives are more flexible and absorb pressure readily rather than resisting it. Mechanical wood shives tend to be lighter colored than those of straw unless comprised of wood bark, which may be practically black and lacking visible fiber constitution after processing and exposure to air. Shives of straw are among those paper specks whose color may change according to viewing conditions. When viewed under incident light projected from above and reflected off of the paper of which they are part, straw shives

[25] F.D. Armitage, *An Atlas of the Commoner Paper Making Fibres: An Introduction to Paper Microscopy* ([London]: The Guildhall Publishing Co., [1957]), 55-56. For those with access to paper that can be tested destructively, Armitage gives clear instructions about the methods for processing paper fibers for identification under a microscope, with illustrations showing common fibers under magnification.

can appear dark. Examined with transmitted light from a source below the substrate, they may appear lighter in color, transparent, or even translucent.[26]

Early manufacturers who turned to wood as a source of cellulose tried to avoid the problem of brown paper by favoring light-colored woods such as spruce or balsam, thereby avoiding bleaching. Vermonter Matthew Lyon was able to make "a fair quality of paper from the bark of the basswood," according to Weeks. Others also turned to forestry to provide cellulose for printing purposes. Western Pennsylvania papermakers Lewis Wooster and Joseph E. Holmes claimed a patent in 1830 for a chemical process used to obtain fiber from aspen trees by treating the pulp with lime. William Magaw disputed their right to the patent, which forced their withdrawal from the market. Daniel Stebbins of Massachusetts attempted to use mulberry wood and leaves in 1834, riding on the wave of a fascination with sericulture during the 1830s. With the fad's expiration, papermaking from mulberry wood also faded. Further American commercial attempts relating to wood papermaking slowed until the introduction of caustic soda processes in the mid-1850s.[27]

Major improvements came from outside of the United States and filtered into the country during the 1840s. Charles Fenerty of Halifax, Nova Scotia, reportedly offered samples of ground wood for inspection in 1844. That same year, Keller patented a grinding machine in Germany that would finally prove the worth of Reaumur's concept for using wood to produce paper, such as that found in a wasp's nest. The device macerated wood into extremely fine pieces, which enabled papermakers to form much smoother sheets that were amenable to the evenness required by automated printing

[26] Armitage, *Atlas*, 55-56.
[27] Lyman H. Weeks, *A History of Paper-Manufacturing in the United States, 1690-1916* (New York: Lockwood Trade Journal Co., 1916), 225. The western Pennsylvania newspaper *The Crawford Messenger* reportedly employed paper by Wooster and Holmes for a single edition.

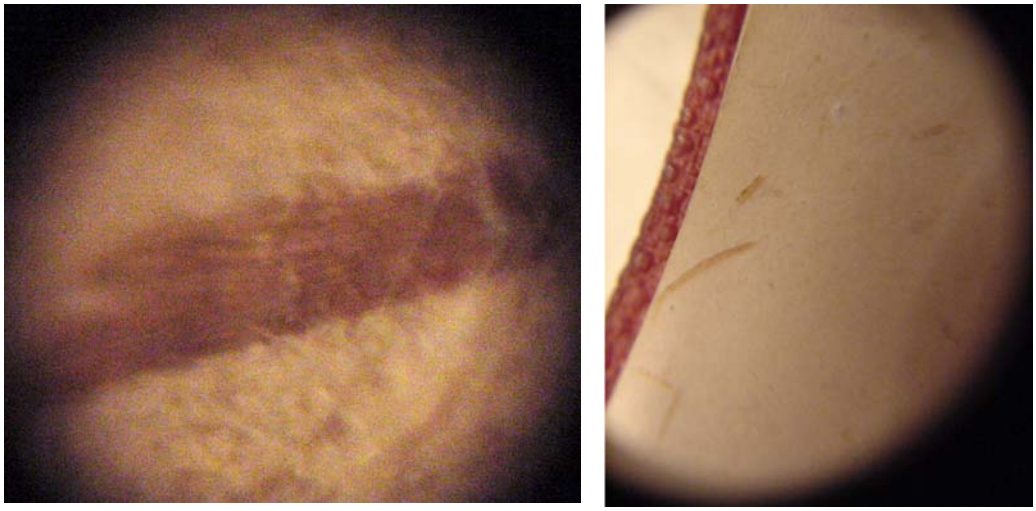

Fig 5.4. Enlarged views of mechanical wood (left) and straw shives

presses. Henry Voelter gained the patent, and, by 1847, his innovations stimulated the use of ground wood for newspaper printing.

A grindstone provided the heart of Voelter's machine. Two or three pockets perpendicularly arranged around the grindstone held logs in place for pulverization. As the grindstone wore away fine bits from the logs pressed against it, running water minimized the temperature and carried away the pulp. Within two decades, Voelter's design formed the basis of commercial production in the United States. A pound of chips could be produced for 8 cents. As little as twelve percent of the original wood was wasted in the process. Steaming or boiling the logs before grinding produced longer but darker fibers, sometimes referred to as bogus manila, which were used for wrapping paper and box boards.[28]

Examples of wood and straw shives can be seen in *Figure 5.4*.[29] Small bunches of short, discolored fibers in paper often resulted from pulps with ground wood. American

[28] Edwin Sutermeister, *The Story of Papermaking* (1954; reprint, New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1962), 50-51, 53, and 55. Images: Courtesy, Library of Congress.

book papers occasionally show wood shives, which often are squarish with defibrillated fibers on the ends, as shown. Straw shives tend to be a longer rectangular shape, with the ends either slightly jagged due to the breakage of the plant's fiber across the grain or diagonally sheared by beater knives. The long shive to the right in *Figure 5.4* is of a type exceptional in white paper, but the shorter clusters visible are typical of shivey substrates. Other light brown shives with perpendicular ends are difficult to identify.

Despite advances, mechanical pulp mills were not commercially viable until 1867 in the United States, making a significant amount of ground wood in an American book paper before about 1870 unlikely even for cheap publications. More common in German newsprint than as a chief ingredient in any antebellum book paper in the United States, mechanical wood pulp can be identified easily by its speckled and dark appearance.[30]

Ground wood produced paper that soon browned, and the shortness of its fibers produced weak sheets. Grinding did not remove lignin, a cellulose-binding substance plentiful in forestry products. Without chemical processing to remove lignin, the resulting paper darkened or browned rapidly with exposure to light. Attempting to lighten the stock's color through bleach only temporarily succeeded; paper treated in that manner reverted rapidly to a dark state, with further discoloration continuing upon exposure to air and light. As supplies of balsam diminished around mid-century, papermakers turned to

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[29] George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *Jack Harold; or, The Criminal's Career* (Boston: W. Berry, 1850), held at LOC. Imprints of this book also held at AAS and the Huntington. The shive pictured at left was an anomaly in the Library of Congress copy of *Jack Harold*; the majority of shives in that volume were much smaller, golden fibers. Courtesy, Library of Congress. The straw shive is reproduced from a straw paper sample found in Joel Munsell, *A Chronology of Paper and Paper-Making* (Albany, N.Y.: J. Munsell, 1856), held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

[30] According to a study of American newspapers published between 1830 and 1900, ground wood received wide application in newsprint manufacturing soon after the pulp mill became established. Before 1868, rag provided fiber for the newspapers sampled by the paper scientist B.W. Scribner; after that date, the majority of papers included ground wood. (Through 1880, straw fiber prepared through chemical processing could also be found in some of the substrates.) See B.W. Scribner, *Preservation of Newspaper Records*, National Bureau of Standards Miscellaneous Publication No. 145 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1934).

pine and spruce trees. They also attempted to treat stock with primarily alkaline treatments to remove lignin and diminish its darkening effect.

Only the least expensive dyes would be considered for use with mechanical wood pulp. Because of its instability, ground wood paper failed to hold color well, causing papermakers to reject costly or fast dyes. When such paper was to be colored, papermakers opted for inexpensive, temporary colorants. In the United States, the rough appearance and poor endurance of mechanical wood pulp discouraged its use for book papers, although the quickly discolored paper made from such pulp found its way into newspaper production after the Civil War and book papers by the 1880s.

The first successful commercial process for applying chemical action to wood resulted from the work of Hugh Burgess and Charles Watt in the 1850s, which was also applied to straw papermaking. The English inventors established and patented a soda process in the early years of the decade, but turned to the American market when they found little demand for their method in England. In 1854, they patented the soda process in the United States and hoped to profit from their entry into the American market. They succeeded in finding a buyer for their patent but received only one payment on the amount due, causing Burgess and Watt to lose out on their expected financial success.[31]

The Burgess and Watt technique took advantage of the effectiveness of combining heat and a strong alkaline solution in reducing wood or straw into fiber. When first adopted in the mid-1850s, the technique called for digestion in cylindrical rotary vessels or spherical tanks, with chips and liquor introduced through a manhole. Workers

[31] Alexander Watt, *The Art of Paper-Making: A Practical Handbook of the Manufacture of Paper from Rags, Esparto, Straw, and Other Fibrous Materials, Including the Manufacture of Pulp from Wood Fibre, With a Description of the Machinery and Appliances Used, To Which are Added Details of Processes for Recovering Soda from Waste Liquors* (London: J.S. Virtue and Co., 1890), 17

pressured vessel contents using a tightened cover, cooking the churning pulp completely. Heat escalated the action of the caustic soda. Small batches took extended cooking times, but the process evenly and thoroughly digested the pulp. The presence of acid byproducts induced by cooking and the introduction of sodium salt solutions by papermakers kept alkalinity under closer control than in other processes, leaving fibers strong rather than damaged by intense and uncorrected alkalinity.[32]

Cost-saving measures affected the wood pulp's quality, however. Too little caustic soda left wood pulp dark, uncooked, and difficult to bleach. Paper made from such stock contained many deep brown shives. Decreasing the amount of chemicals increased the necessary cooking time. The closed digester forced papermakers to rely upon their shop knowledge rather than immediate observation for judging the completion of the cook. Excessive processing or the addition of chemicals destroyed fibers and made for weak paper.[33]

In preparing straw stock with caustic soda, papermakers balanced the cost of soda against their ability and willingness to boil under pressure. Adding a smaller amount of a chemical agent required more steam pressure; conversely, reducing steam pressure required more chemicals to be added. Both stocks could produce a similar quality of paper given skilled processing, but higher pressures tended to darken shives and destroy fibers to a greater degree. Carefully supervising chemical digestion with less steam pressure averted vat leakage, boiler explosions, and over processing, but it was more expensive. Fire protection systems, such as the fire extinguisher and engine advertised in Hofmann's 1873 treatise, became even more necessary after the introduction of the

[32] Sutermeister, *Story of Papermaking*, 59-60; Watt, *The Art of Paper-Making*, 17.
[33] Sutermeister, *Story of Papermaking*, 62-64.

Burgess and Watt method. Fire retardant systems continued to be commonplace for decades due to the dangers of manufacturing pulp under high steam pressure.[34] Straw would not have been preferable as the sole fiber for white printing paper before the mid-1850s, but its use as an unpublicized ingredient in certain papers served as a reminder of the varied shop practices that kept machines running in the midst of supply difficulties.

The conspicuousness and size of shives in samples examined show some relationship to dates of publication. The four works through 1850 contain a moderate to very noticeable concentration of shives across papers. While significant enough to give the perception of a poorer quality paper, those elements remain small, measuring from 0.5 x 0.2 mm to less than 1.0 x 0.2 mm. Starting with those published in 1851, papers increasingly show a higher density of shives, which often are larger than in previous years. A slight correlation is apparent between sheets with smaller shives and lighter weights of paper. More substantial sheets tend to have at least a small number of medium or large shives.

Thickness and Tone

Two books show extremes of thickness during the 1850s. A pugilism instruction text sold by several publishers alongside books listed by Ashbee contains the thinnest text block paper during that decade of all books in *Appendix A*. Written by English boxer Owen Swift and reprinted throughout England and the United States during the 1840s, *Boxing Without a Master* became a standard item within William Berry's publishing list. Publishers advertised their offerings with an eye toward replicating and expanding

[34] Carl Hofmann, *A Practical Treatise on the Manufacture of Paper in All Its Branches* (Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1873), 420.

consumer taste. Selling the twenty-nine-page pugilism pamphlet alongside *Venus in Boston* and *City Life* tied Berry's racy books and his sensational crime newspaper *Life in Boston* to a masculine, working-class social world.[35]

Against the law or verging on illegality during the nineteenth century, boxing events allowed sporting men to create fraternal bonds through mutual spectatorship. Bachelors staked out sex-segregated public spaces through activities that defied legal authority and linked a man's identity to working-class fraternal sports.[36] Paired with sensational novels, Berry's boxing guide became an avenue for promoting semi-erotic fiction as masculine reading.

Rather than associating with men of the boxing ring, Cicily Martin writes her story of being a courtesan, whose clientele included both clerks and gentlemen. *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin* provides explicit sexuality in its narrative and illustrations, and the text paper upon which it is printed offers a curious example of extra-thick paper. The book followed the plot of the more famous *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, popularly known as *Fanny Hill*. *Cicily Martin* traces the adventures of a courtesan in 1840s New York as a vehicle for a series of sexual adventures, from the seduction of a simple-minded country lad to flagellation between willing lovers. A rural New Yorker who made her way to Gotham, Cicily Martin came to the city and naively

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[35] Owen Swift, *Boxing Without a Master, or, Scientific Art and Practice of the Art of Self Defence* [sic] (Boston. William Berry & Co., 1851), held at AAS.

[36] Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); Mark C. Carnes, *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). On the making of masculine identity through work in the antebellum period, see Eva Baron, ed., *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991) and Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic, New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford, 1984). The role of secret fraternal societies and rituals in supporting masculinity that opposed an increasingly feminized religious sphere is explored in Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings For Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

applied for a job as a chambermaid only to be lured into work in a brothel, whereupon she commenced her new profession of courtesan.

In her amours with men, Cicily Martin initiates several into the delights of the whip, a propensity noted much more in English erotica than in the works produced in other countries. The plot includes references to rival audiences for local actors, bearing a striking resemblance to the events leading up to the Astor Place Riots of 1849. Street descriptions identifying New York's bustling theater district of the late 1840s help in temporally placing the novel's action, as well as in identifying the work as being American in authorship. Significant explicit additions in the text were made for the 1938 version of the work, which until recently was considered to be the first edition. The exchange of a scene before a Japanese magistrate in the 1846 edition for a New York district court in the 1938 edition dates the first copy prior to the late 1860s.[37]

Like Fanny Hill, Cicily Martin remained true in her heart, if not in her actions, to her first lover. At the end of Cicily's fictional autobiography, the main character concludes her adventures with a return to innocence increasingly typical in books considered indecent in America. In a plot turn common among erotic novels of the nineteenth century, she asserted "…if I thus succeed in convincing … them that the only path to true happiness is the path of VIRTUE, I shall be doubly paid for my pains in penning this my early experience." Although marriage proved less exciting than her adventurous single life, Cicily regained respectability and social position.[38]

Textual references and features of the book tied content to readers' lives through familiar events, and forms to publishers' production realities through material

[37] *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin* (New York: Sinclair & Bagley, [1938]), held by author; and *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin* (New York: Sinclair & Bagley, 1846), held at AAS.
[38] *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin.* (1846), 112.

peculiarities. The most striking detail of the book's paper is the thickness of the aged white substrate in the text block. The soft, high bulk paper measures .15 mm, mimicking English book papers or better quality works of major American publishers, such as Ticknor & Fields. The text paper and colored interior paper are similar in sheet formation and shive appearance, although the text block substrate is thicker even than the engraved frontispiece, which measured .13 mm.

The use of more expensive text block paper throughout the publication may have been necessary because of a rag shortage, or simply as a nod to pretentiously thick English book papers of the 1850s and 1860s. Although unusual, some printers did use copperplate paper for book printing, albeit at a greater cost. With copperplate papers most available in sheets half the size of common letterpress paper, it is also possible that the choice of paper allowed the publisher to select a printer with a smaller press. While reducing the press run, employing a confidential printer could shield a publisher from public knowledge about illicit activity. It is more likely, however, that the abnormal thickness can be explained by a strategy to present the book as being longer than its number of pages warranted. Although often weaker than ordinary book paper, substrates processed into soft, extra thick sheets helped publishers present a work as being more substantial in physical form. This deception encouraged customers to assess the heft and substance of a book as weightier than the likely durability of its materials.

Both the publisher and the date listed on the title page are false. Although signed with an alphabetic system more common in England than in America, *Cicily Martin* nevertheless was unknown to Ashbee. The paper characteristics and textual references suggest that the book was printed in the late 1840s or between the mid-1850s to the early

1860s rather than in 1846, as the title page asserts. The references to street locations, the paper type, and its listing in publisher advertisements dated in 1859 and the 1860s indicate that *Cicily Martin* probably was printed no earlier than the 1850s.

During the years between *Boxing Without a Master* and *The Adventures of Cicily Martin*, book papers studied hover near thirty-six pounds, with an increasing tendency around the mid-1850s toward beige rather than grey or for retaining whiteness. A group of four books held by AAS within a single, rebound volume displays no publisher imprints linking them to one another, yet several bear similarities in the papers upon which they were printed. It is not possible to find conclusive links among *The Mysteries of Bond Street* (1857), *Isabel* (1859), *The Loves of Cleopatra* (1860), and *The Amorous Intrigues of Aaron Burr* (ca. 1861) through typographical evidence, however. Published between 1857 and 1861, the four have varying typographic styles on title pages, signing indentations, and a stylistic "The End" as a closing note. However, all books are laid out with one-column text in slightly different Scotch face fonts. Despite variances in size, leading, and the crispness of type, each book opens the text with the first word set in small capitals. [39]

The rebound books have no wrappers and no illustrations, leaving only the text block for analysis. Except for *Isabel*, the books all have beige white paper, with medium level sheet formation and moderately noticeable small, square shives. From 1857 to 1861, the paper becomes thinner and the shives slightly larger. In that latter year, paper for

[39] George Thompson, *The Mysteries of Bond Street; or, The Seraglios of Upper Tendom* (New-York: [s.n.], 1857); *Isabel: or, The Intrigues of the Court of Aragon* (New York: Published for the Trade, 1859); George Thompson, [Appolonius of Gotham, pseud.], *The Loves of Cleopatra: or, Mark Anthony & His Concubines: A Historical Tale of the Nile* ([New York]: Published for the Trade, 1860); and *The Amorous Intrigues and Adventures of Aaron Burr* (New York: Published for the Proprietors, [ca. 1861]). All held at AAS. The two copies of *The Mysteries of Bond Street* held by the AAS are identical in type and paper, except for aging variances. It is possible that George Thompson had a hand in producing all four books.

Aaron Burr also includes blue and red threads, as well as specks that most likely are bits of bark. *The Mysteries of Bond Street*, written by George Thompson, exposed the heartless seduction of two women by an abortionist and the subsequent unsolved murder of the doctor. The novel contains an eleven-page addition titled "Facts, Theories, and Parallel Cases…," rounding out the structure into six octavo gatherings. Printed on a final page that otherwise would have been blank was an advertisement for three unrelated erotic books. The publisher's advertisement from Henry S.G. Smith links Frederic A. Brady, who operated clandestinely under that name, with the unidentified imprints.

In tone and shive qualities, the beige white paper upon which three of the books were printed evidence similar manufacturing methods but increasingly cheaper papers. During the mid-1850s, the imprint of Henry S.G. Smith appeared on *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* and *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings*.[40] Those beige white papers are thicker and contain even more abundant shives, although in somewhat different shapes, than the group of three books to be printed from 1857 to 1861.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the papers for each of these titles, which range from historical romances to anti-Catholic fiction, are quite similar in their relative quality. Even if separate publishers took part in producing these books, a single quality appears to have dominated within production circles responsible for their printing. The paper similarities over time suggest that one publisher with a steady input of paper from a specific manufacturer originated at least three of those books.

[40] *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia: Being the Intrigues and Amours of a Jesuit and a Nun…* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith & Co. [Frederic A. Brady], [1854]; and Amy Morton, *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings; Being a Complete History of Her Eventful Life and Melancholy Death in the Charitable Hospital, Paris* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith [185- or 186-]). Both held at AAS.

False Imprints

Books printed on ground wood paper were exceedingly rare in America. Semi-erotic publications featured paper with qualities generally characteristic of American book publishing, allowing false imprints to be detected. A prevalence of wood-like chips and the characteristic browning of paper, as distinguished from the tan color of chemical wood pulp, shows that a set of books with Boston imprints were published elsewhere.

The two-volume erotica bibliography of Rolf S. Reade and more recent work by Peter Mendes contradict one another about the actual imprint location. Edited and published after the author's death, the *Register of Erotic Books* is known to contain errors, credited to the rushed final editing of the work. Unfortunately, no complete listing of those mistakes has been compiled. The Reade bibliography lists several works with Boston imprints for which physical evidence lends support to Henry Spencer Ashbee's attribution of those books to German rather than American origin. Technical analysis can corroborate Mendes's attribution of those works to a German publisher.[41]

Exotic imprints such as Cosmopolis, reported straightforwardly in Reade's work, can be discerned readily as facetious. Those hidden behind true city names, such as Boston, Philadelphia, or variations such as Philadelphie, are more difficult to disprove. Though American publishers may have wanted to disguise their efforts and attach a *cachet* to publications by attributing a book's origin to a foreign source, the contrary in fact occurred. Some foreign publishers attempted to obscure their connection to illicit publications through the ruse of an American imprint. Books ascribed to a fictitious

[41] Rolf S. Reade [Alfred Rose], comp., *Registrum Librorum Eroticorum*. Vel (sub hac specie) Dubiorum: Opus Bibliographicum Et Praecipue Bibliothecariis Destinatum, 2 vols. (1936; reprint, New York: Jack Brussel, 1965); and Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English, 1800-1930: A Bibliographical Study* (Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1993).

publisher in Boston may have been part of an attempt by a publisher to evade prosecution in another municipality. Those books, sharing "Chesterfield" as the surname of the reported publisher, can be identified as German through the analysis of their papers.

The choice of Boston as a false imprint acknowledged the bifurcated publishing sector of that city. Ticknor & Fields, whose Old Corner Book Store provided a publishing landmark from the early 1830s to the Civil War, symbolized the New England markets and literary tastes catered to by many of that city's firms. During the same period in which Ticknor & Fields profited from brisk sales of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, William Berry made his name by publishing George Thompson's *The Countess*. The Granite City was home to two tiers of publishing, with the semi-erotic fiction, spiritualist pamphlets, and radical abolitionist texts of Berry, Bela Marsh, and James Redpath making a name for Boston alongside titles sold by upstanding literary houses. Cut-rate pirated editions abounded, making the city less a genteel book trades center than a fractious marketplace. Long-established houses sought to protect their positions and investments through recourse to courtesy of the trade, a custom by which previous relationships between publishers and authors informally secured protection against competing editions of a book.

In the turbulent market of the 1840s, newspaper supplements forced book sellers to participate in price wars that eventually resulted in many books being sold at a loss by major publishers. The competition destroyed much of the city's informal publishing hierarchy. During the 1840s and the 1850s, story papers serialized fiction, serving as outlets for material also published quickly in book form. Newspaper publishers encouraged the efforts of new authors with writing contests, ensuring a supply of

entertaining and light reading to meet consumer demand. Both well-known publishers and a rowdy second-tier fiction market made Boston their home. Either sector might have been responsible for an illicit publication, although blame fell more easily on vendors such as William Berry, whose places of business could be found on many of his publications in the late 1840s and through the 1850s. New York might have been better known as the publishing center for both mainstream and illicit publications in America at mid-century, but false imprints by a publisher purportedly named Chesterfield and operating in Boston recognized the persistence of erotica publishing in the Granite City. The published version of Reade's bibliography suggested that works published by Reginald Chesterfield, R. Chesterfield, and Frau Chesterfield from Boston might have been printed in Altona, Germany, but failed to provide authoritative information.[42] Standard sources for identifying American publishers offer no references to a firm with the surname of Chesterfield. An exhaustive search of Boston city directories locates no publishers, booksellers, or printers with that name during the years of supposed publication and preceding decades.[43]

Two surviving books attributed to Chesterfield possess brownish paper with a high incidence of chunky, deep brown shives. These features point toward manufacture with large amounts of mechanical wood pulp and are more closely connected to the manufacture of German books through the 1860s. The papers in a pair of surviving

[42] As recorded by Reade in *Register of Erotic Books*, the works are: "PRIAPIC ROMANCES. 'PRIAPISCHE ROMANE.' 3 bde., with 15 plates. 12mo. Boston (Hamburg? 1880?)." " 'ROMAN, DER, EINES ÖFFENTLICHEN MÄDCHENS.' Zweite Auflage, 314, 16mo. Reginald Chesterfield, Boston (Mass.), 1866."; and "Dandini, Carlo, pseud. 'DIE VERSCHWÖRUNGEN IN BERLIN.' Nachtliche Eroberungen in der preussischen Residenzstadt von Carlo Dandini. 3 Auflage, 336, 16mo. Boston (Altona, 1870?)."

[43] Boston city directories surveyed from 1840 to 1890 include: *Stimpson's Boston Directory, New Directory of the City of Boston, Adams's Boston Directory, The Boston Directory,* and *The Directory of the City of Boston*. This group is subsequently referred to as *Boston City Directories*.

Chesterfield-associated books, published in different years, strongly appear to be of German rather than American origin.[44]

Ashbee's suggestion that the moniker Chesterfield and location of Boston served as cover for a German publisher from Altona, an industrial section of Hamburg known for its association with illicit activity, can be supported by physical features of the books themselves. In a similar manner, certain copies with imprints from Philadelphia or Philadelphie can be excluded as American publications. *The Mémoires de Suzon*, attributed to W. Jackson et Cie of Philadelphie implies a deception, and the substrate confirms the ruse. The handmade paper in an existing volume corresponds to that used in small editions of French books in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and is unlike book papers from around 1880 in the United States. An earlier nineteenth-century French edition of *Le Citateur, Par Pigault-Lebrun* shows the tendency of French publishers to use handmade paper, which was much more available in France than in the United States, for continental erotica. A partial watermark '4' close to the fore edge trim in a copy of that book shows on the book's handmade laid paper. Although Ashbee did not note the 1830 edition, that work certainly came from a French publisher.[45]

Colored Wrappers

American indecent books containing machine-produced papers and with straw fibers dyed more easily yellow than other colors and became a point of especial focus for

[44] [Gustav Schilling], *Der Roman eines öffentlichen Mädchens* (Boston [Altona]: Reginald Chesterfield VerlagsBureau], [1862]; and Carlo Dandini, *Die Verschwörung in Berlin ...* (Boston [Altona]: Reginald Chesterfield [Verlagsbureau], [1860]). Both held at the Kinsey Institute for Sexual Research.
[45] Jean-Charles Gervaise de Latouche, *Mémoires de Suzon, sœur du portier des Chartreux: Suivis de l'histoire de Marguerite, fille de Suzon* (Philadelphie: W. Jackson et Cie.[ca. 1880]), held at Kinsey Institute; and Anthony Gavin, *Le Citateur, Par Pigault-Lebrun* (Paris: G.-E. Barba Fils, 1830), held at LOC.

observers of American erotica. The yellow-wrappered books derided by James D. McCabe proliferated along with the abundance of flawed paper. McCabe enthusiastically recorded the success of Harper Brothers in supplanting the popularity of those books:

> Novel-reading has always been a passion with Americans, but at the period referred to the best novels were published at such high prices that but few could afford to buy them. The masses were compelled to put up with the cheap, flashy stories which were so well known some years ago as "yellow covers." This style of fiction, now confined to the lowest class of readers, at that time found its way into almost every house, and the popular taste was at a very low ebb."[46]

Harper's Library of Select Novels indeed made pirated English books attractive to consumers of lower-class publications and gained sales with its brown-wrappered volumes that sold for 25 cents. But McCabe was too eager to provide evidence of superior business practices and overstated the firm's success. Contrary to his assertion, no immediate decline of dubious reading took place. Books with yellow wrappers flourished in the antebellum period, even though critics regarded them with disdain. Some of the books that Ashbee identified as indecent, such as *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings*, and others that predominated among the advertisements of American publishers, like *Secret Habits of the Female Sex*, bore yellow covers. But so, too, did the American Tract Society's *Family Christian Almanac*. Any number of subjects might lie within the embrace of that cheap binding style, which was ubiquitous rather than reserved for suspect literature.[47]

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[46] McCabe, Jr., *Great Fortunes*, 373.

[47] Amy Morton, *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings; Being a Complete History of Her Eventful Life and Melancholy Death in a Charitable Hospital, Paris* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith, [185- or 186-]); and Jean Dubois, *Secret Habits of the Female Sex: Letters Addressed to a Mother on the Evils of Solitude, and Its Seductive Temptations to Young Girls, the Premature Victims of a Pernicious Passion, with All Its Frightful Consequences…* (Philadelphia: [s.n.], [186-?]). Both held at AAS. *The Family Christian Almanac For the United States, For the Year of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ 1844…* (New-York: American Tract Society, 1844), held by author.

The variety of books that appeared in yellow wrappers included many that filled cultural spaces between socially approved, morally uplifting texts and erotica. Readers turned to books to make navigable public arenas often dominated by working-class and sporting men. Through fictional descriptions based upon the real dangers of city life, they informed readers about the wily approaches of "sharps," or swindlers, who populated public spaces in cities. Colorful cheap books entertained cultural voyeurs intrigued by the risks and opportunities that lay in brushes with social strangers and urban dangers.

Popular almanacs, street and rail guides, and minstrel songbooks opened the way for readers to inform themselves about, participate in, and master unfamiliar social settings. A phrenologist might employ a paperback as a tool for informing clients about a quack tonic. A playbill garnered from a visit to the theater might, with its bright yellow covers, recall for a patron the glamour of theatrical personalities and the ever-present prostitution of entertainment districts. Literary references asserted that both men and women read such books, even though racy books rarely contained references to the cheaper forms of illicit print. "A book with yellow covers, soiled and torn" became for one writer the visible emblem of a French novel by Eugene Sue, luring a woman's attention away from her child and her role as a mother. The private actions of men and women consuming texts in distinctively dyed wrappers were perceived as being in conflict with social decorum.[48]

Publishers of semi-erotic books relied upon more than yellow as a color for their wrappers. Both white and colored paper for wrappers enhanced the street sales of books.

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[48] John Phœnix, *Phœnixiana; or, Sketches and Burlesques* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1856), 36; Olive Logan, *The Mimic World, and Public Exhibitions: Their History, Their Morals, and Effects* (Philadelphia: New-World Publishing Company, 1871); and Ann S. Stephens, *Fashion and Famine* (New York: Bunce & Brother, 1854), 292-293.

Whether applied in the form of ink or as a paper dye, other colors promoted the sales of publications also, and particularly those sold in public places. Semi-erotic publications dating from the middle of the century included colored wrappers or frontispiece papers, disguising second-quality papers and adding visual interest. Green, blue, and salmon were among the most common non-white papers, but yellow proved the most popular for printing illustrations. Yellow not only caught the eye of a consumer but also remained highly legible when printed in black. Bibliographer Michael Sadleir has noted that hardbound "yellowbacks" were precursors in England to the paperback boom in the 1870s and toward the end of the century. Those hardbound books covered with yellow and often glazed paper bearing colored illustrations were cheap, frequently focused on sensational fiction, and could be purchased readily through street and railway vendors.[49] City mysteries and the novels of George Thompson found ready demand in periodical depots, railroad news stands, and along docks where men primarily gathered to socialize and work. Parts of an 1849 serial publication by William Berry, who sold semi-erotic books and newspapers in Boston, could be distinguished from one another at a distance through their colored covers. William Berry filed for copyright for the first two parts of George Thompson's novel in March of 1849, following up with the final two in October of that year, with prints of each wrappers deposited for copyright (fig. 5.5).[50]

[49] Michael Sadleir, "Yellow-backs," in *New Paths in Book Collecting: Essays by Various Hands*, ed. John Carter (London: Constable & Co., 1934), 129, *Book Collecting: A Reader's Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947), and *XIX Century Fiction: A Bibliographical Record Based on His Own Collection*, Vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951).

[50] *Copyright Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870* (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held in Copyright Office, Library of Congress; and *Copyright Title Pages of the United States,* 1790-1870, Early Copyright Records Collection, Library of Congress. Courtesy, Library of Congress. G. Thomas Tanselle, "Copyright Records and the Bibliographer," *SB* 22 (1969): 77-124 offers useful information about approaching copyright research.

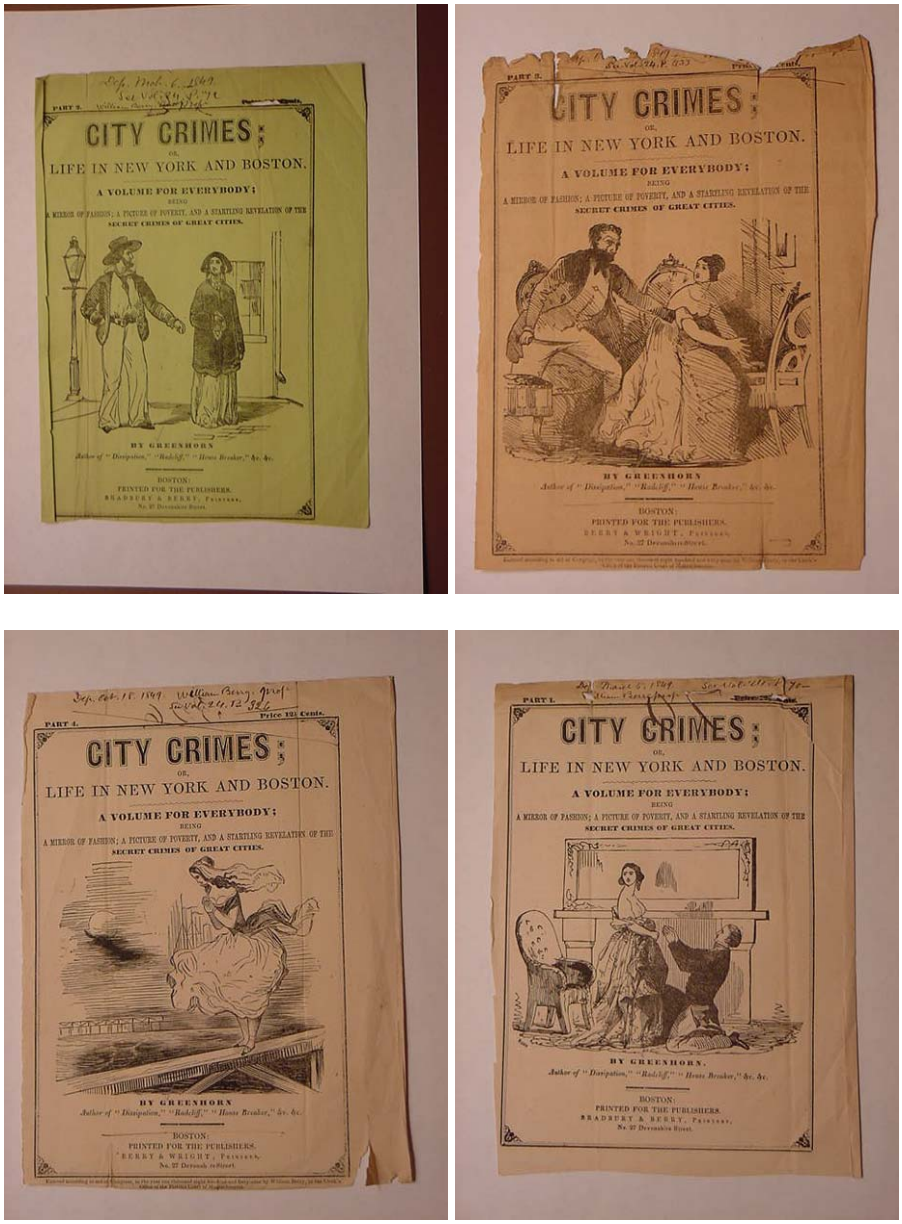

Fig. 5.5. *City Crimes* (1849)

Berry caught the attention of passersby and signaled new installments of the crime novel *City Crimes* by altering the color of its covers. Sold at 12-1/2 cents each, the series commences with a titillating cover. A man and woman in a parlor enact the middle-class ideal of a gentleman proposing to his love, but with an erotic twist. The scene reveals the brute power dynamic of sex in securing a man's love: With a dress

falling off a woman's shoulders to reveal her nude above the waist, she calmly looks away from a kneeling suitor. Her gaze toward viewers of the book reinforce the connection of potential readers to an inversion of middle-class values, asserting before a family hearth her sexuality and identity as a respectable man's object desire.

The remaining covers display more discrete illustrations of a woman and man meeting in the street, of a woman being assaulted by a criminal in her own home, and of a lone female figure sadly contemplating suicide from her perch on a bridge railing. Berry published the four sections separately and then together at the end of the series. He retained the plates for each wrapper illustration, integrating them into the text for the larger work. No copies of the novel in parts are known to have survived.[51]

Nineteenth-century American manufacturers predominantly added yellow chromate, ochre, orange chromate, cochineal (carmine), Venetian red, copperas (green), Prussian blue, and blue vitriol to pulps, making a rainbow of colored papers available to printers. Papermakers generally added alum as a mordant to the stock before introducing color, thereby fixing the pigments onto the fibers upon mixing. Certain colors required special handling. Orpiment, a yellow pigment poisonous because of its arsenic content, became much less common during the century. For papermakers creating chrome orange from yellow chromate, only unsized papers could be produced for industrial use. Alum, the key ingredient for sizing machine-made papers, caused the orange product to revert to its base color of yellow.[52]

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[51] George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *City Crimes; or Life in New York and Boston* (Boston: W. Berry, 1849). The complete edition is held by the Newberry Library, Chicago, and has been reprinted in George Thompson, *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, eds. David S. Reynolds and Kimberly R. Gladman (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002). See the very useful bibliography in this volume, which lists institutions holding Thompson's publications.

[52] Charles Thomas Davis, *The Manufacture of Paper: Being a Description of Various Processes for the Fabrication, Coloring, & Finishing of Every Kind of Paper…* (Philadelphia: Baird & Co., 1886), 464 and

Green and blue dyes for papermaking could not be fixed as readily to non-rag fibers, resulting in a mottled appearance in papers produced from mixed pulps. Through these visual cues, papers most likely to have been manufactured with rags rather than mixed furnishes can be detected. Types of fibers and colorants intertwined in paper dying, and colorant developments expanded the ability of publishers by their application as printing inks and washes for hand coloring.

Colorants

Publishers employed colored wrappers to attract street sales of books, integrated illustrations on colored paper inside of books to cut costs, and charged customers higher prices for books containing hand-colored illustrations. The chief value of color in illustrations and pictorial papers lay in the relevance of the context of their appearance to middle-class aspirations and expressions of taste. Cultural encodings associated with specific colors mattered less than the circumstances in which colors were employed.

Scholars have scarcely delved into the history of ink, despite the importance of ink selection alongside that of paper color as a marketing strategy. Printing ink and hand-applied colorants shaped text and illustration reception to individual readers. Whether printed onto paper or applied as paints, color could enhance sales. Unlike the use of colorants in papermaking, printing with colored ink had little effect upon the longevity of nineteenth-century publications.

Ink ingredients remained strikingly simple throughout the nineteenth century. The basic ingredients of ink were varnish and an insoluble pigment. Rosin frequently served

310. Cheap and medium-quality papers more often had the mordant put into the coloring material, although the best practice recorded by manufacturers and historians has been to introduce alum before colorants.

as a siccative to aid in speeding the drying process. A varnish that dried easily and into which a finely ground pigment could be evenly suspended created a uniform color across a printed page; in colorants applied by hand to illustrations, gum arabic often served as a vehicle. Despite the apparent simplicity of ink, the ever-growing variety of papers and printing techniques made numerous demands upon its manufacturers, whose precise work procedures and minor formulation changes were closely guarded and have not been well understood.[53]

For centuries, printers in Europe and then in America traveled to a location outside of cities to drink and feast as they prepared ink. The Wayzgoose, or ink making festival, combined a necessity with the opportunity to escape the strictures of ordinary shop work. Throwing bread or an onion into the boiling oil became a trade custom reputed to refine oil, and printers vied for the fried crusts. When cooked, linseed oil gives off a noxious odor, and it seems likely that turning ink production into a sort of social event made the best of a dangerous and smelly occupational necessity.[54]

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[53] Colin H. Bloy's *A History of Printing Ink, Balls and Rollers 1440-1850* (London: Evelyn Adams & Mackay Limited, 1967) continues to be the standard work in the field. The major nineteenth-century treatises on the subject are William Savage, *On Printing Ink, both Black and Coloured* (London: 1832) and Alois Senefelder's *A Complete Course of Lithography: Containing Clear and Explicit Instructions in All the Different Branches and Manners of that Art: Accompanied by Illustrative Specimens of Drawings. To which is prefixed a history of lithography, form its origin to the present time … translated from the original German of 1818* (London: 1819). Siccatives added to speed up drying, such as oxidation agents, rarely were recorded, although the choice of pigment and associated viscosity requirement are known factors in determining drying times. Bloy and Savage include a number of recipes for inks that Americans drew upon for letterpress, intaglio, and lithographic inks. Important reference sources for learning about specific pigments, their historical uses, and their preparations include *Artists Pigments: A Handbook of Their History and Characteristics*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1986, 1993, and 1997) with eds. Robert L. Feller, Roy Ashok, and Elisabeth West FitzHugh, respectively; Cennino Cennini, trans. Daniel V. Thompson, Jr., *The Craftsman's Handbook: The Italian 'Il libro dell'arte'* (1933; reprint, New York: Dover, 1960); Harley, *Artists' Pigments*; Ray Smith, *The Artist's Handbook* (New York: Knopf, 1993); and R.W. Weber, *Artists' Pigments: Their Chemical and Physical Properties* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1923). A useful source for studying colonial American dying and painting practices, among other handcraft activities, is *Valuable Secrets in Arts, Trades, &c. Selected from the Best Authors and Adapted to the Situation of the United States* (New York: Evert Duyckinck, 1809).

[54] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink,* 7-8; C. Ainsworth Mitchell, *Inks: Their Composition and Manufacture, Including Methods of Examination and a Full List of British Patents* (London: Charles Griffin & Company,

American and European printers in the nineteenth century increasingly bought varnish to mix with pigments or purchased prepared ink, thus avoiding the tedious preparation and fire hazard of boiling linseed oil to the correct body. Mixing unusual colors on premises allowed a printer to reduce the outlay for costly inks to be used for only small jobs. They also adapted formulations to varying shop conditions. Heat, cold, and humidity especially affected how press, ink, and paper reacted to one another.

Manufacturers cooked linseed oil until the vapors could be lighted and the cooling liquid could be drawn out into short strings that indicated the correct viscosity for the type of printing ink to be made. Then workers melted rosin and dissolved soap slices into the mixture, bringing the burnt oil back up to the boiling point. Linseed oil, like other fast drying oils such as walnut or hempseed, dried by oxidation, or exposure to the air, while rosin became solid when cool.[55] Rosin retarded feathering of ink, caused by the spread of oil into the paper. Kept a trade secret until the 1820s, the addition of soap increased the sharpness of impressions, stopped ink from sticking to type, and aided in slowing the hardening of stored ink.[56]

Small changes made to standard recipes distinguished qualities of ink, leading ink makers to not disclose the addition of soap in trade manuals through the first decades of the century. The primary difference among inks, however, usually related to the care with which pigments were ground before being added. Ink quality became even more important when the widespread use of composition rollers in the 1820s replaced ink balls.

Limited, 1937), 232. Both accounts chiefly rely upon the work of William Savage for the history of techniques. It is questionable whether either bread or onions would have drawn off contaminants from the oil; the exercise likely became justified as a trade secret long after the practice of eating the fried items became popular. Industrialization and specialization in ink making caused the decline of the Wayzgoose.

[55] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 15.

[56] Mitchell, *Inks*, 231.

Earlier attempts inspired by textile and pottery manufacturing to design cylinders for inking the forms of power presses had been marred by the seams required to join leather coverings. A smooth-surfaced roller could be molded out of a glue and molasses formula, however. The development relieved an automation bottleneck in printing, making power presses capable of achieving their maximum speeds with better quality. In turn, press mechanization placed more pressure on ink manufacturers to turn out inks with greater and finer consistency.[57]

The use of composition rollers for power presses stimulated the design of better grinding machines, which in turn improved the quality of pigments and made inks much less expensive. Printers of ephemera and publishers of newspapers were indifferent to ink that might yellow in the future or smear when held carelessly by a reader, but they strongly desired a low cost ink that could print crisp black impressions. Procuring a mechanized grinder enabled an entrepreneur to cash in on a market that grew along with the role of print in business, home decoration, and leisure reading.[58]

Rather than the introduction of new colorants or chemicals, grinding represented the greatest advance in nineteenth-century ink. Grinding reduced the laborious hand work required of craft workers and greatly elevated ink quality. Unlike beating fiber in a Hollander so that cellulose became evenly distributed while absorbing water into its cellular structure, fine grinding ensured an even suspension through blending two materials that were not chemically bonded. The marked difference between inks produced by a printer and by a manufacturer, whose milling pulverized and blended

[57] A small amount of Paris white (carbonate of barites) or calcium carbonate occasionally was added to composition. Although easily deformed by higher temperatures, rollers were a significant advance over ink balls, the sheepskin of which printers routinely soaked in urine to keep the untanned leather pliable and mold free. See Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 55-62.
[58] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 64-65.

varnish and pigment together, soon halted in-shop production of ink. By 1850, the industry had become mechanized.[59]

Slight variances among ink recipes created substantial differences in drying times or the look of a printed page. The fineness of the final grinding by commercial ink makers produced a well suspended pigment, and this superiority distinguished ink as a commodity from that made by shop workers for their own use. Paper and printing speed determined the characteristics needed for best results, and the type of ink affected the quality of a finished publication as much as, or more than, the type of press.[60]

Intaglio, lithography, and letterpress presses each required slightly different inks, necessitating small but important changes in the production of each. Intaglio processes required inks viscous enough to penetrate into engraved portions of a plate but tacky enough so that the ink adhered to the paper and completely vacated the engraving upon the paper's removal. Oxidation through exposure to air largely allowed letterpress inks to dry, but intaglio inks also required a certain amount of adsorption, or penetration into the interstices of the substrate being printed. For engraving, the varying depth of deposited ink conveyed black tones and nuance. The slowness of the process allowed more time for fixing the ink than could be allotted when producing editorial matter, and the damp paper used in a rolling press required pigments that would not spread on contact with water.[61]

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[59] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 51-52.
[60] Carleton Ellis, *Printing Inks: Their Chemistry and Technology* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1940), 472.
[61] Paper can absorb ink by soaking up the vehicle, or pigment may be implanted into the paper through adsorption, in which the liquid is transferred into the interstices of the paper fibers and remains as a fluid primarily near the substrate surface. See E.A. Apps, *Printing Ink Technology* (London: Leonard Hill [Books] Limited, 1958), 116-117. This work is the basis for E.A. Apps, *Ink Technology for Printers and Students*, 3 vols. (New York: Chemical Publishing Co., Inc., 1964), which includes additional updated material relevant to machine tenders and for the upkeep of equipment. *Inks for Major Processes*, volume two of the set, is most pertinent to the current discussion.

Letterpress inks for newspapers and books apparently shared a great deal in common with those for intaglio printing, although the latter required more granular pigments for easy wiping from engraved plates. More than any other type of ink, that prepared for letterpress printing dried by oxidation, or contact with the air.[62]

Bookwork required a somewhat stiffer body to carry more pigment so that less ink could be used, reducing offset of stacked sheets. Newspaper inks especially needed to dry quickly because of the speed of the presses. Unsized or lightly sized surfaces, such as newsprint or other low quality papers, readily absorbed inks. With higher absorbency, inks for these papers could be formulated to carry less pigment by volume of the vehicle. The quick-drying ink required for cylinder printing tended to allow pigment to rub off onto a reader's hands. Cheap rosin in the ink increased strikethrough, or the undesirable visibility of matter printed on one side from the unprinted side of the paper. Printing on the less sized paper more often used with cylinder presses encouraged the use of cheaper pigments, further reducing the cost of the publications produced.[63]

Lithographers made the greatest demands upon ink makers. Lithography required a varnish that resisted water penetration and yet could be thinned to accommodate a variety of tint levels suitable for reproducing drawings. Viscous lithographic inks with higher levels of pigment dried much more slowly and were more expensive, due to the amount of pigment.[64] Historian Colin Bloy noted that lithographic inks varied from letterpress chiefly in the tendency to incorporate wax into the varnish in order to retard

[62] Ellis, *Printing Inks*, 437. The characteristic odor of ink relates primarily to oxidation.
[63] Ellis, *Printing Inks*, 216.
[64] Ellis, *Printing Inks*, 291 and 270 provide modern information from which historical details can be extracted. See also Mitchell, *Inks.*

emulsification. This may have helped to ensure that non-image areas, bathed in water, rejected ink while greasy image areas attracted it.[65]

Well-sized paper required more printing pressure to force ink into the interstices of the paper fiber. Cylinder presses generally required thinner inks because more viscous inks worked better with faster presses. Rather than mashing the ink into a substrate, the extreme pressure tended to squeeze ink away from the point of impression, transferring type and images with outlines that became less distinct as the great pressure of the machine wore away at plates.[66]

The rounded ink outlines that often overlap the edge of individual letters are known as letterpress ink squash and are characteristic of that printing process. Due to the variance in printing pressure and speed, platen presses are best suited to paper with harder sizing, and cylinder presses to those with a softer, more absorbent surface. The balancing of press availability, ink on hand, and the paper supplied by a publisher or purchased for a job probably involved less intricate advance analysis, however. In practice, printers paid by the job simply used their shop knowledge to know when to adjust machine tolerances, ink type and viscosity, and press makeup in order to best match ink and the type of paper provided to the conditions under which they printed.

Black pigments served all sectors of the printing industry. Burning rosin and collecting the soot by placing a piece of leather or a metal plate above the flame produced lampblack in large quantities, but other sources of pigmentation could be found. Burnt vine twigs or bones produced granular pigments best suited for lithography. Dead yeast and wine lees or shale could also offer black. Lampblack retained a brownish tint even

[65] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 29.
[66] Ellis, *Printing Inks*, 196.

after refinement because of the unstable, tarry substances that adhered to the pigment. The impurities could be removed but only by adding greatly to the product's expense.[67] Lampblack's larger particles inhibited strikethrough, or the carryover of ink from the front to the back of a sheet of paper.[68] Insoluble in water, lampblack served well for typographic and lithographic inks. Small additions of Prussian blue increased the deepness of the black.[69]

Red satisfied the desire of most customers for added color through the colonial period, although other pigments could be mixed into inks upon request in the eighteenth century. Mineral and organic pigments came to play a much more important role in a printer's ability to meet customer needs after the introduction of color lithography in America during the 1820s and 1830s of. The yellows, browns, and reds of ochre, sienna, umber, Venetian red, and vermilion derived from minerals. Although relatively permanent, mineral pigments tended to be dull. They required careful refinement and grinding to ensure even suspension and to lessen their abrasiveness, which could damage both paper and plates.

From the woad plant, Americans derived indigo, an important dye source for textiles as well as paper and ink. Plant dyes for red, such as logwood and madder, could be precipitated as salts in a process that transformed dyestuffs into lakes. Made into solid pigments, these substances were ground and combined with oil vehicles. Extracts from the shells of an American insect named cochineal produced carmine. Mixed with

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[67] Mitchell, *Inks*, 249-251 and 253. It should be noted that pigments of burned gas residue gained the name carbon black; that of rosin was called lampblack. Both substances were, of course, composed of carbon.
[68] Ellis, *Printing Inks*, 217.
[69] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 42-43. Bloy notes that Savage recommended the addition of small amounts of indigo, Prussian blue, or a combination of the two to large quantities of lampblack and vegetable black to achieve the best quality of ink, 232.

turpentine, carmine could be combined with varnish to make ink. The deep color of Prussian blue, an inorganic pigment, stood alone or might be added to a black to increase the depth of blackness. Black or white pigments might be added to change the tint of the main pigment, but adjusting the properties of black ink changed the intensity. For instance, thinning an ink's body required that more of the substance be applied in order to evenly and completely cover a surface. Buying ink from a merchant cut production time, reduced noxious smells and fire hazards, and aided in developing standard costs for printing in color. The availability of pre-mixed formulations from ink makers encouraged printers to apply more color.[70]

The popularity of color lithography drove typographic printers to incorporate a greater range of colors into their standard practices, instead of relying upon black with accents of various reds to provide for all but the most particular tastes.[71] Red, blue, yellow, and green became standard jobbing inks colors. Ink maker Moses P. Prout advertised himself as the first American apprentice in his field, making the transition from the hand press era of the 1810s to the composition rollers of the 1830s. In 1836, he sold nine different typographic inks, from cheap news black costing 30 cents a pound to double superior black at $5.00 a pound, with common qualities costing $1.00 or less. Mather prepared colored inks on order from his customers, selling blue, yellow, green, and cheap red for $2.50. Like other vendors, he offered better types of red as well, costing $12.00 and even $24.00 per pound.[72]

[70] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 40.
[71] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 32-33. The development of lithographic printing in America, catalogs advertising colorants among other supplies, and trade literature from the antebellum period corroborate linkages among color lithography, commercially available colorants, and letterpress printing at these dates.
[72] Bloy, *History of Printing Ink*, 84.

By preparing their own colors or purchasing newly available premixed inks, American tradesmen in the 1830s and 1840s competed for work in a growing print market stimulated by the versatility of lithography. Early lithographic printers added a tint similar to a watercolor wash to topographical prints, covering large areas in an illustration. With gradated blue, fawn (or taupe), or combination of the two, prints gained a more realistic sense of perspective. Although lithographers could create works of art through the mechanical addition of color, most prints of any process that were not black-and-white before mid century relied upon colorists to provide details, add highlights, or touch up prints.

Hand Coloring

Touring through America during the 1840s, Charles Dickens commented on finding colored prints in city homes, barrooms, and prairie cabins. Inmates in Boston's House of Industry positioned colored prints upon the walls of their neat rooms. Saloons in New York decorated their interiors with colored prints of the nation's first president, American eagles, or Queen Victoria, with bits of colored paper adorning the nooks from which bottles were drawn. Traveling along mud-filled roads in the grassy lands outside of St. Louis, Dickens stayed at an inn with two parlors. Colored presidential prints and the image of a young lady adorned the lesser of the two rooms and small oil portraits of the owner's family the nicer sitting space.[73]

Consumers in the 1840s had begun to expect color from textiles, wall papers, and printing. The exquisitely hand colored engravings of North American wildlife in John

[73] Charles Dickens, *American Notes; and The Uncommercial Traveler* (Philadelphia: T.B. Peterson & Brothers, 185-?]).

James Audubon's *Birds of America* greatly stimulated demand for colored illustrations. Published in London, the engraved and carefully hand colored prints caused a sensation in England and the United States when published in London from 1827 to 1839. The huge elephant folios were followed by a royal octavo size edition in the 1840s published in America, with later editions in the succeeding decades. Following that success, Audubon painted watercolors of American mammals for *Quadrapeds,* also produced as lithographic prints in the United States.[74]

"A painting, or picture, is distinguished from a print only by colouring, and the manner of execution," advised the eighteenth-century English critic William Gilpin in an influential treatise advocating proper methods for evaluating collectable prints.[75] An original painting might be out of the reach of most working men, but any decoration on the walls of an American home enlivened and elevated the domestic atmosphere.

Men often participated in the preparation of the highest quality hand-colored prints, but the cheapness of women's labor allowed printers to make color commercially successful. Rather than combining pigments with an oil vehicle, colorists mixed pigments with a gum arabic solution to suspend the pigment for application and then to bind it to the paper as the paint dried. A colorist could apply paint directly, especially for finely detailed work, but mass production required greater speed.

With stencils cut to the shape of areas to be left uncolored, unskilled workers quickly brushed paint onto the correct locations. In practice, stenciling left telltale marks. Color blocks might consistently shift away from printed outlines; creating pools of ink

[74] John James Audubon, *The Birds of America* (London: R. Havell, 1827-1839).
[75] William Gilpin, *An Essay on Prints* (London: R. Blamire, 1792), 1.

that deepened colors only in those places. Paint at the edge of a stencil also could cause a faint offset image in an unintended area from the repositioning of the stencil.

In *Julia; or, The Singular Adventures of Beautiful Girl*, the hand-colored blue and rich red have remained bright, despite the passage of time. Published by H.L. Williams while he and his Edward P. Williams brother built up their separate publishing ventures in Boston in the 1840s, *Julia* presents an example of the difficulty in verifying the identity of American versions of books listed by Ashbee. *Julia* (1845) was one of many sensational works associated with story papers in that city. *Julia* also is the short title of a volume published by J.H. Farrell more than a decade later and associated with *The Amours of a Musical Student*. Ashbee notes the confusion that surrounds the title, with three books seeming interchangeable yet varying in key phrasing of their titles. The cover art that accompanied Henry L. Williams's version of *Julia* appears to imply his work to be the same as *Julia, or I have saved my Rose*.[76]

Williams issued his publication in a hand-colored wrapper to gain an advantage in the cut throat publishing environment of Boston in the 1840s. During that decade, editors of story papers issued their publications as newspapers, taking advantage of low postal rates for periodicals, and also with wrappers, to be sold as books. Cheap book publishers, offering unauthorized reprints of English authors and tapping into an emerging supply of American fiction written by women, initiated price wars against more established members of the trade.

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[76] *Julia; or, The Singular Adventures of a Beautiful Girl* (Boston: H.L. Williams, 1845), held at AAS. *The Amours of a Musical Student* (New York: J.H. Farrell, [185-]); *Julia: or, where is the Woman that would'nt* [sic] &c. [New York: J.H. Farrell, 185-], a translation from the French of *Julie, ou j'ai sauvé ma rose*; *Julia, or I have saved my Rose*; and *Eugenia, or Where is the Woman that Wouldn't*. The latter works are cited by Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Catena Librorum Tacendorum*, 229. Without a corroborated text for each of these, it is difficult to compare the novels.

The custom of trade courtesy sometimes protected publishers holding contracts with foreign authors from intrusion upon their titles by other firms, but the system broke down before mid-century, enabling pirated editions to flourish. The glut of books authored by, but not authorized by, English writers slashed the profits of publishers who paid writers for permission to print a text. In an effort to cut costs as prices for books plunged, publishers focused their production on items to be sold for under $1. They also offered both cloth binding and paper wrapper versions of many books.[77] Prices for books in wrappers dropped to 25 cents, with parts or smaller volumes selling for 12-1/2 cents.

Earlier publishers had provided temporary wrappers to protect books until readers chose to bind a publication, but cheap book publishers turned toward wrappers as the only covering for a work intended to be ephemeral. Hand coloring the cover emphasized that the publisher did not expect *Julia* to become a bound volume in a permanent library; its decorated ephemeral form was the only way in which the book was expected to exist. Color that dashes outside of the lines in a wood engraving on a wrapper attests to quick, low-cost coloring (fig. 5.6).[78] The lack of stenciling marks indicates that the wrappers were detailed as demand required rather than in advance, as would be necessary for a large edition.

The blue in the H.L. Williams book could have been produced by many colorants, but Prussian blue, cobalt, and artificial ultramarine were three possible sources. Americans primarily imported commercial artist's pigments in the middle of the nineteenth century. Manufacturers in England, France, and Germany produced finely ground, consistent colors preferred for mixing into watercolors and oil paints. Blue had

[77] Schick, *Paperbound Book in America*, 50.
[78] *Julia* (1845). Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

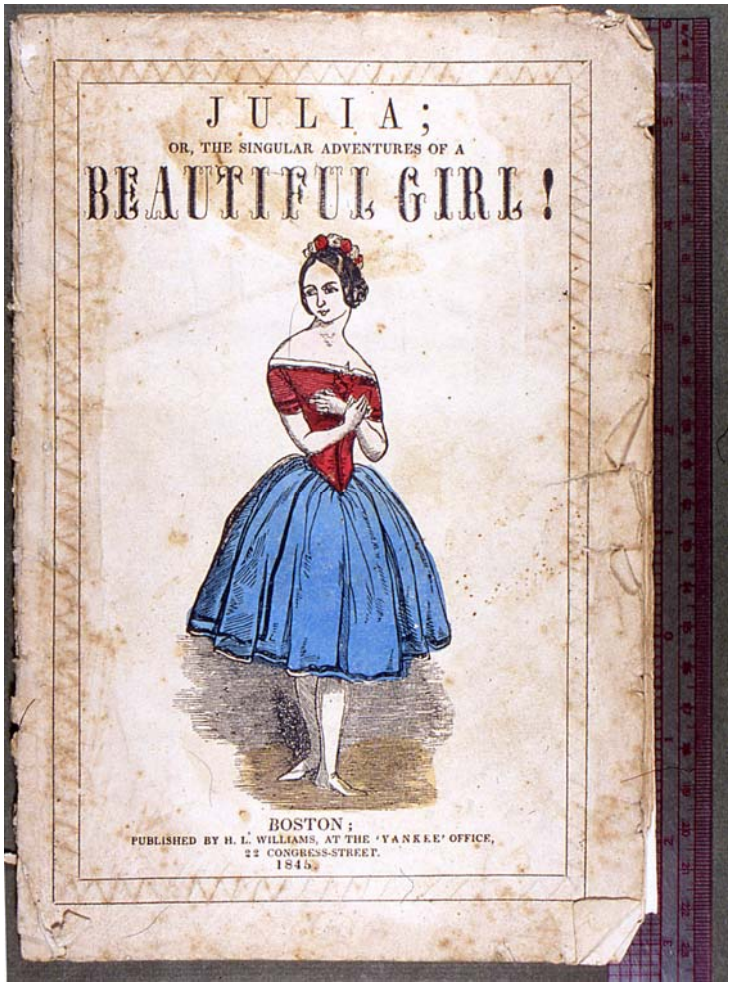

Fig. 5.6. *Julia* (1845)

been used for centuries for painting and papermaking, but new colorants came onto the market in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with an increase in knowledge about chemistry. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Prussian blue offered "the first of the modern pigments." An intense, deep blue with low transparency, the new pigment retained permanence and could be mixed to achieve other tints. Combination with white pigments to produce the color on the cover of *Julia* made the pigment less permanent.[79]

[79] Elisabeth West FitzHugh, ed., *Artists' Pigments*, Vol. 3, 191-199; and Harley, *Artists' Pigments*, 65-68. A useful website for researching pigments and gaining access to color images of colorants is "Pigments through the Ages," <http://webexhibits.org/pigments/>, accessed March 25, 2005. "Pigments through the Ages" is a public service website of the Institute for Dynamic Educational Advancement, a non-profit

Smalt was prepared by the very fine grinding of blue glass, which imparted its hue to artists' colors and pulps. The roughness of the pigment presented a problem to painters, but the color continued to be useful for common paintings throughout the eighteenth century. In the late seventeenth century, it became known that cobalt produced the color in blue glass. The subsequent production of more versatile blues from cobalt caused the decline of smalt. Sometimes called smalt in the nineteenth century, cobalt became the blue colorant of choice for many artists in the nineteenth century. [80]

A synthetic form of ultramarine came on the market just before the mid-nineteenth century. It became successful immediately because of its lower cost and faithfulness to the ancient color produced by grinding the precious stone lapis lazuli. The artificial version discovered about 1830 was also intense and light fast. Mixed with white lead, ultramarine could have produced the clear light blue on the cover of Julia, but the addition of anything but an exceptionally pure white pigment would have caused degradation of the blue and subsequent fading. Like Prussian blue, artificial ultramarine contained properties that made mixture with white problematic and that likely would have altered the bright but cool blue still visible on the cover of Williams's book. For these reasons, cobalt appears to be the most likely colorant used.[81]

The strength of the medium blue elevated readers' perception of the title character, presenting a striking but feminine image. The color retains intensity even in a slightly diluted application. The colorist also applied carmine, a traditional better-quality scarlet, to accentuate Julia's costume and the roses in her hair. A light pink, prepared

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Maryland organization that sponsors educational programs linking science and art. Webexhibits.org is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), Time and Frequency Division.

[80] Harley, *Artists' Pigments*, 51-53.

[81] Harley, *Artists' Pigments*, 41-44 and 55-56; Ashok, ed., *Artists' Pigments*, 55-60.

from carmine, distinguishes the dancer's exposed neck from the paper upon which the illustration was printed. A slight brushing of fawn, derived from ochre, mimics a lithography technique that colored certain areas in order to emphasize the unprinted color provided by the paper itself. Fawn added at the feet of the dancer gives the impression that she is wearing white tights, adding to the perceived brightness of her attire. Her posture, as well as her colorful ensemble, match those expected of the main character. The plate apparently was preserved and sold to George W. Hill of New York, because it subsequently appeared in as an uncolored print in *Adolene Wellmont* in 1853. Julia became "Louise d'Arincourt, the Parisian Ballet Girl," one of two illustrated plates used previously by other publishers but integrated by Hill into *Adolene Wellmont* as part of the four internal illustrations.[82]

Williams issued numerous adventure stories by J.H. Ingraham in the 1840s. He printed an advertisement for that author's new novel, *Montezuma,* in *Julia*. Along with selling his newspaper the *Yankee* and books by mail, Williams offered multi-part or complete novels for 12-1/2 cents each, ten novels for $1.00, or a year's subscription to the newspaper along with four books for $1.50. At effectively 10 cents per copy when bought in bulk, Williams edged into the highly competitive lower-end book market while turning to mail order business in the early 1850s to help keep distribution costs low.[83]

By 1850, Berry's advertisements offered discounts for books sent directly to customers. He moved his postal operations to New York in the early 1850s, taking advantage of the distance basis of the rate structure that brought Midwestern cities into

[82] Herself, *Adolene Wellmont; or the Female Adventurer. Being the Confessions of a Girl of Spirit, and a True and Thrilling Pictures of the Mysteries of City Life* (New York: George W. Hill, 1853), held at AAS.
[83] Publisher advertisements, *Julia* (1845).

his reach. Berry advertised novels available by mail even before postal policies shifted in 1851 to include a new category of printed matter for books.

Williams and Berry began relying upon regional networks of booksellers to promote their publications. In order to gain a competitive advantage, Williams moved to New York, where he and two of his siblings operated as the Williams Brothers, continuing to copyright some novels and to pirate others. Henry L. Williams and Edward P. Williams interlaced their publishing lists with books later reprinted by the House of Beadle as dime novels in the 1860s. In a similar manner, William Berry's novels intersected with those of Frederic A. Brady, a publisher of popular books.

Sensational fiction found a ready audience among American readers in the 1840s and 1850s. Crime novels and semi-erotic books responded to anxiety about the unfamiliar dangers of urban centers that drew young men and women seeking prosperity and adventure. Trial records of infamous murders and divorce proceedings provided fodder for writers of fiction, who supplied a proliferating demand for intense narratives and exceptional adventures.

Complex Colorants

The Civil War inspired avid readership among soldiers in camps, focusing publishing attention upon the huge market for leisure reading in camps. As Captain George F. Noyes of the Union Army noted in 1863, soldiers had access primarily to low-cost books whose literary substance matched their physical features:

> "I sincerely wish that some good citizen would send to our army through the Sanitary Commission a supply of mental food for the men in the shape of a thousand or two copies of each our leading monthlies –the Atlantic, Continental, and Harper's. … Now and then a book-peddler came along; but even a famished

> brain can not find food in "The Torn Pocket-handkerchief – A Tale of Love and Murder," which, with other books of the yellow-covered family, composed his stock."[84]

He complained specifically about yellow-wrappered books, but soldiers read books with covers in a variety of hues. The House of Beadle supplied dime novels to soldiers, building their reading habits with books that tied patriotism to Western Indian fighting and pioneer exploration. Early Beadle dime novels featured orange wrappers with a woodcut. Mass produced, sold for 10 cents each, and promoted as books in series, they quickly set a style among lower-level publishers. Orange and yellow colorants overlapped through their chemical composition, with pulps for salmon wrappers tending toward yellow if not prepared carefully. The addition of orange chromate gave a warm tinge to yellow papers. The complexities of color traversed paper types and dying practices, helping publishers to develop marketing strategies through physical details.

Paper for *The Outlaw*, a Berry publication reprinted by Brady between 1864 and 1869, has retained its whiteness, possesses few shives, and differs little in thickness from related Berry books that Brady produced. *The Outlaw* was one of a series of three crime novels following the adventures of Jack Harold, the title character of a successful novel. Brady expended little money on production for the reprints, reusing plates prepared for the initial two-column publication in 1851 by William Berry, with only black artwork to highlight the narratives.[85]

Under his own imprint, Brady advertised the stories as part of the "Books by Popular Authors" series. He put more effort into publishing other works associated with

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[84] George F. Noyes, *The Bivouac and the Battle-Field; or, Campaign Sketches in Virginia and Maryland* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1863), 225. No italics in the original.
[85] George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *The Outlaw, or, The Felon's Fortunes* (New York: F.A. Brady, [1864-69]), held at AAS.

Fig. 5.7. *Fast Life in London and Paris* ([1864-1869])

his series, "Brady's People's Novelletes," however. *Grace Willard*, *Alice Wade*, and *Fast Life* featured illuminated covers, and were printed with bold colors and a wrapper illustration uniting the works issued in that series. *Fast Life* gathered vignettes about travel in Europe and sporting life in London and Paris, drawn into a purported memoir of the life of the Marquis of Waterford. In the illuminated cover, shown in *Figure 5.7*, Brady's attempt to mass produce a single cover that could accommodate the later addition of title information for a variety of action adventure novels can be discerned.

Produced quickly but with an eye toward boosting sales, the hand-colored covers could be overprinted with customized text.[86]

A wood engraving overprinted and hand stenciled with garish color adorns the front cover. Unbroken ropes of color vines encircling the vignettes required printing, and the misaligned blocks of color were mass produced. Pools of color at the edges of certain blocks indicate that some hand stenciling took place. Blue, yellow, and red fill the page, with highlights added from a fourth color mixed of the yellow and red. A light blue wash provided sky tones for scenes depicting Indian fighting, a cavalry charge, a naval battle, and a solitary man's pursuit of a woman's heart.

The thick, glazed cover has not fared well over the years and has become brittle and faded to a tan that detracts from the colored front. R.W. Sindall has noted that the processes for producing this shiny finish with a smooth surface, which could include a water finish as well as plate-glazing and supercalendering, worked to the detriment of a paper's permanence. While the high-pressure smoothing could make good quality papers, the amount of pressure necessary for desirable glazing reduced the strength and elasticity of finished paper.[87] Although of a substantial weight, the text paper also has faded toward beige. Both wrapper and the text block were produced with moderate skill, but the excessive alum favored for sizing paper to be painted upon has since decomposed into acidic compounds, damaging the book beyond repair. The incomplete washing of chemicals from the stock also may have added to the paper's deterioration.

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[86] *Fast Life in London and Paris: Including a Spirited Detail of the Life and Amours of the Famous Marquis of Waterford* (New York: Frederic A. Brady, [1864-1869], held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

[87] R.W. Sindall, *The Manufacture of Paper* (1908; reprint, New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1919), 233-234.

Science aided the spread of color in printing papers, but much later than in the textile industry. Although immediately in demand in the textile industry after the introduction of Perkin's mauve in 1857, aniline dyes had little impact upon papermaking until the 1880s. By 1871, a copy of *Extracts from the Theological Works of Rev. Peter Dens* in its colored wrapper shows an unusually bright example of a violet-colored wrapper, intended to attract new readers to a familiar anti-clerical publication. Combining that striking color with a multi-lingual layout that allowed readers themselves to compare translations from Church instructions to priests, the publisher's strategy appears to have been to attract readers excited by bold colors and expecting direct revelation of clerical misdeeds. Many anti-Catholic publications showed investments in typography, which intensified the effect of color upon the reader.[88]

Typography made textual content more authoritative, bringing a factual account to the reader's attention. The practice of auricular confession served as a constant irritant for Protestants who argued that a priest's pledge of secrecy placed clergy in potential opposition to legal authorities. Furthermore, the practice of auricular confession located the priest physically in close confines with male and female penitents, and spiritually in a powerful position as inquisitor of those seeking guidance and absolution. Numerous authors cited the intimate and suggestive questions that confessors asked female penitents as themselves being lewd. Different editions of *Extracts from the Theological Works of the Rev. Peter Dens* offered original Latin translated into English and sometimes German, allowing American readers to judge whether instructions to priests served as proof of the illicit foundation underlying auricular confession.

[88] *Extracts from Peter Dens' and Bishop Kenrick's Moral Theology* ([Chicago]: [s.n.], 1871); held at AAS.

A number of copies still exist, typically offering Latin excerpts from *Theologia ad usum seminariorum et sacrae theologiae alumnorum*, a multi-volume reference work for priests, compiled chiefly by Dens. Seeking to address practical issues rather than abstractions, Dens selected contributions that aided in offering guidance to priests.[89]

Charles Sparry copyrighted the text in 1843 at the district court in New York City. He targeted the text specifically to Protestants, with the compositor adding Sparry's one-column footnotes at the bottom of a side-by-side Latin-English translation. The use of a foreign language font, multiple columns, and a footnote adjusted to the length of the text translations added to the cost and scholarly appearance of Sparry's edition. It likely doubled the price for type composition. The layout made bold claims regarding the veracity of the side-by-side translations. Regardless of a reader's understanding of the Latin text, the placement of texts produced a form that impressed readers as transparently authoritative. Printed for the publisher, at least one New York bookseller sold the book for 25 cents.

Such volumes appeared across the country during the next several decades. In 1848, a book copyrighted two years earlier in Philadelphia's district court by "E. Zosimus, a monk of La Trappe" appeared with a Cincinnati imprint. Type wear hints at continual reprints of the edition using stereotyped plates. Advertised as printed for the publisher, the book's rough, colored wrapper indicates that despite the scholarly layout and attribution to a learned source, the publisher sought a more common audience.

A fresh edition in 1871 brought in German alongside English, with the two languages set in separate columns underneath a full-width Latin text. Type composition

[89] Background on Pierre (Peter) Dens can be found in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1967), 774.

in German practically required a German compositor or printing firm, according to Theodore De Vinne's advice to American printers in that year. The unnamed publisher added material from the *Theologia Moralis*, a three-volume work published in 1860-1861 and written by the prominent Catholic theologian Archbishop Francis Patrick Kenrick.[90]

Directed to "Fathers, Husbands, and Brothers" and probably an attempt to evangelize German Catholics, the book offered a reward of $1000 to any Catholic priest or bishop who could successfully dispute the text's truthfulness. "Homo," the author's pseudonym, provided a name that resonated with the target audience's gender while neatly advising against distribution to minors or women – infractions that publishers of erotica knew would draw the attention of obscenity prosecutors. But just as importantly, the warning stimulated interest among men in reading salacious material under the guise of providing information with which they could better protect wives and daughters. A 50-cent copy of the book offered by a bookseller who purchased the printed text and later added his own wrapper appeared in a strikingly bright violet wrapper.[91] The distinctive wrappers mark the thin book as being different from similar publications and

[90] *Extracts from Peter Dens' and Bishop Kenrick's Moral Theology* ([Chicago]: [n.p.], 1871). Held at AAS. For information about Kenrick, see *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 155-156.
[91] The title page notes the text as being the "sixteenth thousand," but the wrapper advertises the book in its "eighteenth thousand" printing.

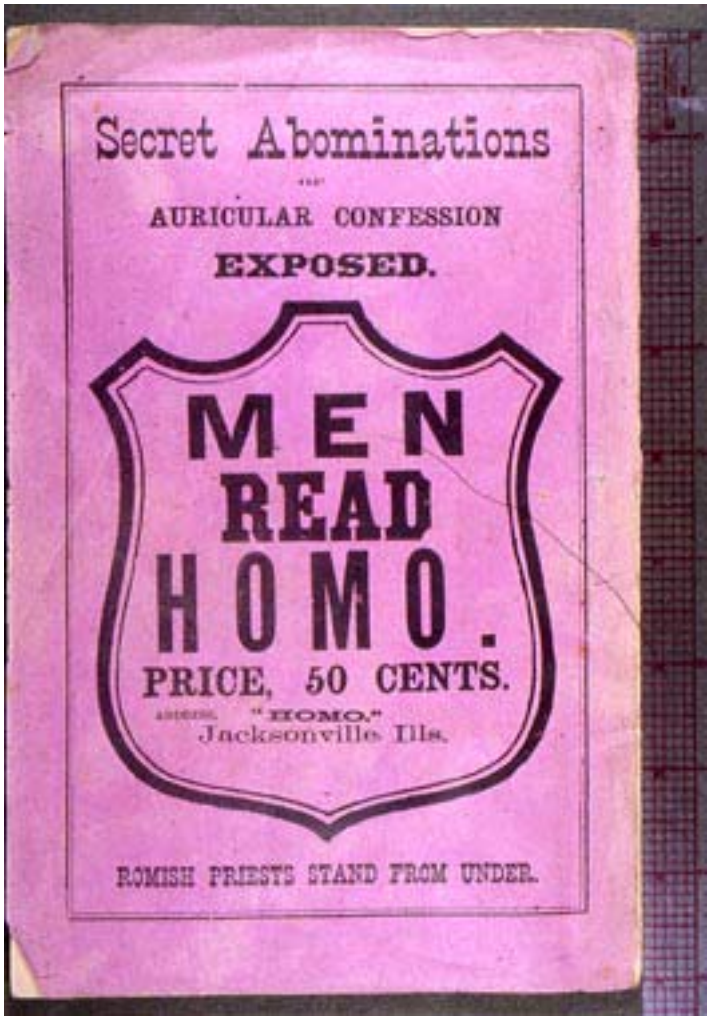

Fig. 5.8. *Extracts from Peter Dens' and Bishop Kenrick's Moral Theology* (1871)

strongly suggest that selling on the street or in public places took place. *Figure 5.8* shows the brilliance of the back cover, which has faded less than the front cover. The brightness of the color and fading pattern suggest that expensive aniline dyes might have been used to produce the wrapper paper.[92]

Although Perkin's mauve and other aniline dyes were taken up with great success by the American textile industry in the 1860s and 1870s, papermakers only rarely turned

[92] The back cover of *Extracts from Peter Dens' and Bishop Kenrick's Moral Theology* (1871) retains somewhat more brilliance than the front cover, which probably has been exposed more to light.

to aniline dyes until late in the century. The high cost and impermanence of aniline dyes made them uncommon in papermaking at the time of this book's publication

Other sources of violet are unlikely, however. Papers treated with vegetable dyes were rarely used for book wrappers due to the instability of the color. Mineral and organic violets could be created from Berlin or Prussian blue, or less frequently with artificial ultramarine, with the resulting blue pulp then dyed with carmine. Of the aniline dyes, Perkin's violet could be precipitated by alkalis from its solution, but Hoffman's violet, considered "pre-eminent for its beauty and purity," more closely fits the wrapper at hand.[93]

During the early 1870s, papermakers could purchase Hoffman's violet in a red or a blue tint. Although non-aniline dyes were available, none could have produced such a brilliant color as Hoffman's violet. The choice of a coal tar-derived colorant is all the more remarkable because in the opening years of the 1870s, American manufacturers were only beginning to make consistent use of aniline dyes to produce blues, yellows, or, less frequently, greens. Other colors remained unusual, due to their cost and problems with the adulteration of commercial aniline dye crystals.

Resin, alkalis, acids, and chlorine all could be used as mordants; in papermaking, alum, green vitriol, nitrate of lead, and sugar of lead chiefly affixed dyes to fibers, with alum most used. The choice of Hoffman's violet points toward the addition of an acid mordant. Alum had the unusual capacity of mixing with both acid and alkaline pulps, as well as serving as a mordant for either basic or acid dyes. Nevertheless, the mordant for this colorant likely would have been green vitriol, or ferrous sulphate, which

[93] Davis, *Manufacture of Paper*, 96, 480-482 and 485, quote from 481.

manufacturers especially employed for violets, grays, and blacks.[94] Less alum in the pulp allowed the paper to retain its flexibility over time, rather than becoming embrittled.

Illicit books employed color in any way that could distinguish a volume, with the possibilities related to access to technical processes, materials, and worker skills, as well as the intended outlet for a book. Many yellow-wrappered books fit the image of low literature frequently sold on street corner newsstands or displayed at railway stations in the nineteenth century. Others did not, however. For every surviving book that conforms to such stereotypes about yellow-wrappered books, examples exist for which the links between color technologies and commercial strategies are more varied.

Most books that have survived were issued with paper wrappers, printed in black or additional colored inks and sometimes hand colored to catch the attention of consumers. The less prevalent volumes that featured embossed cloth covers or dyed leather bindings with tooling tend to contain a rather uneven quality of paper types. That disjuncture of paper class and binding details may indicate that indecent books tended to be of a more varying quality than the literary works that collecting institutions have acquired. The lack of high-quality erotica has had the fortuitous effect of making even bad copies of indecent books valuable for private ownership rather than just the highest quality works. Many of the books that have survived were acquired by institutions from trade channels fed by the holdings of individual collectors. For these reasons, books considered indecent during the nineteenth century may be exceptionally representative of actual technical practices for the breadth of American publishing in that century.

[94] Davis, *Manufacture of Paper*, 315-316 and 457-485, esp. 462-463

Chapter Six

The Illustration of Indecent Books

> *Lewd pictures breed hurtful thoughts.* This axiom stands out above all argument.
>
> —Anthony Comstock (1883)[1]

Anthony Comstock saw mere exposure to indecent works as the first step in an inevitable slide toward moral, spiritual, and bodily decline. Untoward words and pictures created images not easily erased by the mind. Illicit thoughts bred immoral actions, according to the moral reformer. Once exposed to the pictures of sin that resided in text, art, and thought, a young boy or girl experienced an ineluctable slide toward moral decay.

Comstock expressed outrage about the ease with which youths ordered "poison" under the seal of the United States Post Office. Tempted by an unscrupulous publisher's circular, boarding school students could send away for material that, when perused, led to their participation in secret vices. All the while Satan watched, Comstock wrote:

> He whispers, "Just look at it a moment so as to see what it is, and then you can destroy it." So urged, the boy breaks the seal and lets the monster loose. The hideous appearance at first shocks the pure mind, and the poor victim would fain put it out of existence. But the tempter says, "It can't hurt you; you are strong. Look it over and see what it is. Don't be afraid." Thus beguiled, a second look, and then a mighty force from within is let loose. Passions that had slumbered or lain dormant are awakened, and the boy is forced over a precipice, and death and destruction are sure, except the grace of God saves him. An indelible stain has been planted upon the boy's imagination, and this vision shall be kept like a panorama, moving to and fro before his mind until it has blotted out moral purity, and the lamentable condition before described is experienced.[2]

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*The author is grateful for opportunities to present material in this chapter to a colloquium at the American Antiquarian Society while holding the Reese Fellowship in American Bibliography and the History of the Book in the Americas during August 2002 and as a work-in-progress seminar at the Book History and Print Culture Program, Massey College, University of Toronto, October 17, 2002.

[1] Anthony Comstock, *Traps for the Young*, The John Harvard Library, ed. Robert Bremner (1883; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 169. Italics in original.

[2] Anthony Comstock, *Traps for the Young*, 135-136.

It is unclear whether Comstock here describes illicit pictures that assault the viewer with their immediacy or the power of text to generate visions in the mind of a reader, but the metaphor of imagery is a key to understanding the danger of indecent books. With or without illustrations, he seems to say, print implanted dangerous graphic memories in the mind of a reader. Rapidly diversifying techniques made pictures and, more generally, print into pervasive symbols for action in the nineteenth century. Print technologies bolstered the ability of publishers to place illustrations in both expensive and cheap books, heightening the hazard they posed through their distribution. The reproduction of illustrations reveals the range of printing practices to a greater extent than text, which was limited primarily to letterpress until late in the nineteenth century.

Aristotle's Master-Piece and *A Sentimental Journey* represent the distance between the extremes of indecent illustrations in eighteenth-century America before the explosion of techniques for duplication in the next century. Many versions of the first work contain crude woodcuts of a distinctly American origin. An explicitly illustrated copy of the second includes skilled domestic engravings mimicking English erotic plates. Borrowing techniques and images primarily from England, Americans over the course of the nineteenth century made the illustration of indecent books a domestic venture through increasingly complex techniques and business practices.[3] Most of the Ashbee titles with illustrations located during this project can be dated from the 1840s to the early 1870s, and every major technique available during that time span is represented among them.

[3] "American illustration of the nineteenth century derived wholly from Europe," opined book illustration historian David Bland, who nevertheless admitted that the American fascination with novel techniques inspired innovations that applied steel engraving to bank note manufacture, tracing photographic images onto wood blocks, and applying photomechanical processes to book illustration. See Bland, *A History of Book Illustration: The Illuminated Manuscript and the Printed Book*, 2nd rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 300-308.

"Prints do not describe or delineate the social in an unmediated and simple way. The history of prints is also the history of a complex dialogue between social history and the history, conventions, and representational capacity of the various genres and forms of printmaking," according to B.E. Maidment. "At one obvious level, the history of prints must include some account of the major technical and economic developments of graphic media within a particular historical period. This technical history will also need to consider the relative autonomy within and between the various genres of printmaking."[4]

Woodcuts, wood engravings, engravings on metal, and lithography transferred original designs into reproducible forms that themselves became tools for multiplication. Draughtsmen struggled to mimic textures, colors, and tonal values despite the constraints of different tools, surfaces, and artistic conventions. As extenders of artistic intentions, those who cut, engraved, and drew reproducible intermediary forms held relatively low status. The mass production of art supported distinctions of originality posed by artists even while undercutting differentiations between creativity and commerce. By the nineteenth century, most artists plied their trade as part of manufacturing processes, rather than in service of "fine" art, according to Susan Lambert. Ideas expressed with the intention of reproduction could not be separated so easily from mass-produced copies.[5]

Each transformation into new media revealed a syntax of technique and conventions, however. Even when focused on exact replication, the work of draughtsmen necessarily created forms apart from those upon which they were modeled. Viewers

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[4] B.E. Maidment, *Reading popular prints, 1790-1870* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 5 and 14.

[5] Indeed, only with the multiplication of images through printing did distinctions between original forms and copies of a work become relevant, writes Susan Lambert. The rise of photography in the middle of the nineteenth century helped initiate a bifurcation in the field of engraving, allowing some members of the trade to gain an identity as initiators of fine art rather than imitators. See Lambert, *The Image Multiplied: Five centuries of printed reproductions of paintings and drawings* (New York: Abaris Books, 1987), esp. chapter one.

understood this translation and read meanings through the filter of representational styles and the context in which pictures were consumed. The intermediary efforts of draughtsmen therefore distanced painting and drawing from prints.[6]

Image, style, and effect are part of the printed image and cannot be separated from techniques of reproduction. The reversal of an image and its multiplication under pressure offer apt symbolism for the role of visual arts as social commentary. Print historians have argued that "a highly critical attitude toward man and society came into being with the making of the first prints in Europe and has remained a central part of printmaking in Europe and America ever since." Although the relevance of technique to the conveyance and construction of meaning has become accepted, the exact mechanisms enabling that communication are far from clear. Studying the range of illustrations and the appearance of techniques in indecent books in America adds to previous work toward a social history of print, promoting further study of the reception, transmutation, and production of meaning.[7]

In American books, woodcuts and wood engravings before 1840 depicted extremes of content. The crude archetypes in *Aristotle's Master-Piece* focused on the horrific results of improper sexual practices, and *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* offered sexually explicit but vernacular wood engravings. Artisans produced for

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[6] In an important essay, William Mills Ivins argued that halftones, which translated photographs into varied dots to create the appearance of a gray scale in a print, appeared to lack syntax and gave the impression of transparency in production between art and printing. Estelle Jussim further writes that the apparent direct transference of a photographic image into print through halftones engendered a sense of objectivity for nineteenth-century viewers. See Ivins, *Prints and Visual Communication* (1953; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969); and Jussim, *Visual Communication and the Graphic Arts: Photographic Technologies in the Nineteenth Century* (1974; New York: R.R. Bowker, 1983).

[7] Frank Getlein and Dorothy Getlein, *The Bite of the Print: Satire and Irony in Woodcuts, Engravings, Etchings, Lithographs and Serigraphs* (New York: Bramhall House, 1963), 10-14, quote from 10. See also A. Hyatt Mayor, *Prints & People: A Social History of Printed Pictures* (1971, reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980).

Aristotle's Master-Piece illustrations that supported the authority of the book at hand. They closely copied images from earlier editions in parallel with the reliance of anonymous contributors upon Aristotle's purported authorship to validate the book. Images that were the basis for the rough wood engravings for *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, popularly known as *Fanny Hill*, may have been imported, but the American productions emphasized enjoyment of sex and found humor in illicit sexual activity. Technical practices, expressive range, and content did not necessarily correspond to one another in such illustrations.

During the 1840s, the production of semi-erotic literature exploded, creating venues for wood engravers learning the trade. Crude but competent blocks in that decade gave way in the 1850s to moderately skillful wood engravings. Relying upon relief processes for art and text gave publishers a variety of options for producing and marketing books. Printed integral to the text or, less frequently, as frontispieces inserted into the book, wood engravings presented a variety of images. They included unremarkable vignettes; offered portraitures; and, especially in their scenes of low-life, drunkenness, the discovery of romantic engagement, and seduction, revealed social transgression. Women with bodices that exposed breasts comprised the most explicit examples of the latter. Among the illustrations in collecting institutions, men rarely can be seen unclothed in wood engravings after 1840.

Lithographs appeared less frequently in comparison to wood engravings. In the 1830s, lithographs could be bought as albums of amorous or erotic pictures or single illustrations. Pictorials proved popular enough to spur a ban in 1842 on their importation, but none of those albums could be located for this research. By the 1840s, lithographed

frontispieces appeared in black and white or as hand-colored prints. Invariably, colorists worked on tipped-in illustrations. Romanticized drawings incorporated bucolic or classical themes, with nude women bathing outdoors or reclining in their beds. Unclothed men occasionally appeared in outdoor scenes with women. Because of incompatibility with letterpress printing, lithographs were inserted into books by hand. The content of planographic illustrations paralleled their adjunct relationship to text. Images corresponded only tenuously to storylines, often adorning rather than explicating an author's writing.

Also printed apart from the text and put into position manually, intaglio illustrations served as frontispieces and inserts, as shown in a copy of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* in the late eighteenth century. Copper and steel engravings became more prevalent in the 1820s and 1830s, joining with letterpress illustrations in some Maria Monk titles to verify the reliability of a narrative. Books crossed boundaries with the general erotica trade. Vendors supplied readers with separate, explicit prints that could be enjoyed separately or placed in a customer's own books. Surviving books with their illustrations removed attest to an interest in prints as objects apart from text. In black ink and less frequently hand colored, engraved illustrations depicting a variety of sexual activities retain the power to surprise or shock readers with their graphic and occasionally humorous images well over a century later.

Publishers combined illustrations with text in ways that encouraged sales. They attempted to generate initial and repeated purchases, and commercialization shaped how a publisher employed technologies. Connections to the trade and standing resources in stereotyped matter influenced the selection of technical practices used. Publishers mass-

produced images, selling them individually, in sets, or bound together in albums with little accompanying text. Illustrations could be reproduced in groups on a single sheet and folded into the pages of a letterpress text block, but intaglio or lithography required more planning. Reproduced apart from the text, those processes required workers to insert pictures between gatherings or leaves, or as a frontispiece before the title page. Purchasing the same title from different publishers didn't ensure that the same – or even any – pictures would be acquired. Stereotyped wood engravings especially lent themselves to addition, deletion, and exchange among editions. They not infrequently passed through the hands of more than one publisher.

Even after books went home with buyers, alterations continued. Readers separated the frontispieces or tipped-in illustrations from their moorings, modifying books and releasing pictures from their textual references. Customers replaced temporary paper wrappers with permanent bindings, enabling rearrangement or replacement of original illustrations. The cycles of production, consumption, and personalization of erotic prints in books showed a remarkable fluidity as technical processes, publisher resources, and buyer preferences stimulated the confluence and severance of illustrations and text in nineteenth-century America.

Illustrations focusing on sexual acts are now rare, skewing any study of illicit literature toward semi-erotic rather than obscene works. Three other types of content can be identified, and they often are socially ambiguous. Illustrations primarily portraying social transgression frequently depicted lechery or unrepentant low life. Artistic representations of classical nudes or semi-clothed women comprise another group. Others

tended to be portraiture and vignettes, without significant negative social connotations and suitable for virtually any publication.

Well over half of the 160 American works studied in this dissertation either advertised or can be determined to have possessed illustrations, yet only one-third of those titles that have survived contain pictures. Traces of yellow illustration paper or other remnants make plain the removal of illustrations from books. The loss of so many books and the reduced proportion of illustrations in the remaining books point toward the significance of visual elements in making a book more valuable. The removal of desirable pictures also provides a rough indicator of the frequency of sexually explicit illustrations in books. Illustrated books appear to have been among the first to be destroyed by moral reformers, government authorities, or a deceased book collector's family. In the face of what is missing, historians should examine illustrations in remaining books as a large but incomplete footprint of the technical and business practices of publishers of American erotic books.

The uneven persistence of nineteenth-century books considered indecent in their own day makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the larger trade in erotic literature. Surviving works in which explicit illustrations have remained bound in with a book as originally issued or otherwise unaltered by an owner are exceptional. The lack of complete editions appears most frequently among titles with sexually explicit art or text. These scarcities do not necessarily indicate that nineteenth-century readers found it difficult to procure a book that is now rare.

Printmaking was a mass production process intended to reach a wide audience, and even a few surviving examples of a print attest to the market that a publisher

anticipated.[8] Comstock distinguished between art rightfully viewed in a museum and its illegal display to the public, which publishers arranged through the marketing and sale of books. Studying the techniques for bringing commercial erotica to those consumers can help us understand how publishers and consumers matched their limited resources to anticipated consumer expectations, with sellers and buyers seeking out one another within the bounded and increasingly assailed market for erotic print.

From Woodcuts to Intaglio

The illustration techniques available in eighteenth-century America were limited to woodcuts and intaglio printing. One rough and the other refined, these processes illustrated two very different books in the latter part of that century: *Aristotle's Master-Piece* and *A Sentimental Journey. Aristotle's Master-Piece*, a midwife's instruction manual, marital aid, and contraceptive guide, offered folkloric information about sexual reproduction to readers in colonial and antebellum America.[9]

Across editions of the title, a recurring frontispiece informed readers unsuitable thoughts rendered ill effects upon one's own body and that of children not yet born. The book's image of a hirsute woman accompanied by a black child proved to be an enduring graphic seen by colonial Americans (fig. 6.1). Several printers arranged to have woodcuts

[8] Jonathan L. Fairbanks, introduction to John D. Morse, ed., *Prints in and of America to 1850*, Proceedings of the Winterthur Conference Report 1970 (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, published for The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1970), xvi.

[9] The American Antiquarian Society holds more than forty different American copies of the work, dating from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. The most often recurring titles are *Aristotle's Master-Piece; Aristotle's Compleat Masterpiece*; and *The Works of Aristotle*. From one to four parts are claimed in different versions, and those sections usually are cited in short form as I. Complete Master-piece (or Secrets of the Nature of Generation), to which is sometimes added the Family Physician; II. Experienced Midwife; III. Book of Problems; and IV. Last Legacy. The earliest known American copy of this book is from 1766, titled *Aristotle's Compleat Masterpiece in Three Parts*. That edition purported to be from England, but can be identified through its manufacture, which includes scabboard binding peculiar to North America, as being produced in the colonies, held at AAS (scabboard binding discussed below).

Fig. 6.1. Hairy maid and child woodcut (1775)

of that illustration, among others, recarved to include in domestic productions of the English book.[10]

Glancing at a portrait of a black man at the delicate moment of conception caused white parents to bear a black infant, according to the manual. A pregnant woman's undisciplined imagination, stirred by a picture of an animal-skin clad John the Baptist, brought about the birth of a hairy daughter. Images worked through perception to become physical reality. The book's illustrations of horrible births seem at odds with its warning to readers about the power of illustrations to induce such results. Pictures in themselves did not produce deformed humanity, of course. Even images intended for spiritual

[10] Elizabeth Carroll Reilly, *A Dictionary of Colonial American Printers' Ornaments and Illustrations: A Tribute to Alden Porter Johnson* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1975). Illustrations from *Aristotle's Master-Piece* include 1091-1093 and 1096-1099; *Figure 6.1* depicts 1093.

edification could be take in by a viewer in a way harmful to progeny. The reader, as much as the information offered, determined the effect of illustrations.[11]

Perhaps the necessary caution about viewing pictures was a clue to a reader's anticipated consumption of the book as an erotic text. The main section of *Aristotle's Master-Piece*, which was an English work, probably dates back to 1684, with publishers revising and adapting the text over the years. Colonists imported editions before the mid-eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, American versions contained four parts rather than one. Claiming authority by relation to the philosopher Aristotle (when in fact there was no connection), the various incarnations of *Aristotle's Master-Piece* were an accepted domestically-produced source of information for Americans seeking private medical knowledge from about 1760 to 1840. Revealing how to conceive children of either sex, as well as theories about how men and women derived sexual pleasure, the book carried folk understandings of sexuality in print across generations of readers.[12]

Throughout the eighteenth century and decades into the next, American editions featured rough woodcut illustrations. Relatively easy to prepare and cheap to produce, woodcuts possessed the crucial quality of being compatible with letterpress, the chief method for printing type. An artisan created a cut by carving off non-printing areas from a plank of wood and leaving only the image to be transferred. Woodcuts, like type, had a

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[11] Mary E. Fissell, "Hairy Women and Naked Truths: Gender and the Politics of Knowledge in Aristotle's Masterpiece," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2003): 43-74. For information about the history of the text, see Otho T. Beal, Jr., "*Aristotle's Master Piece* in America: A Landmark in the Folklore of Medicine," *William and Mary Quarterly* 20 (April 1963): 207-222, esp. 209-210.

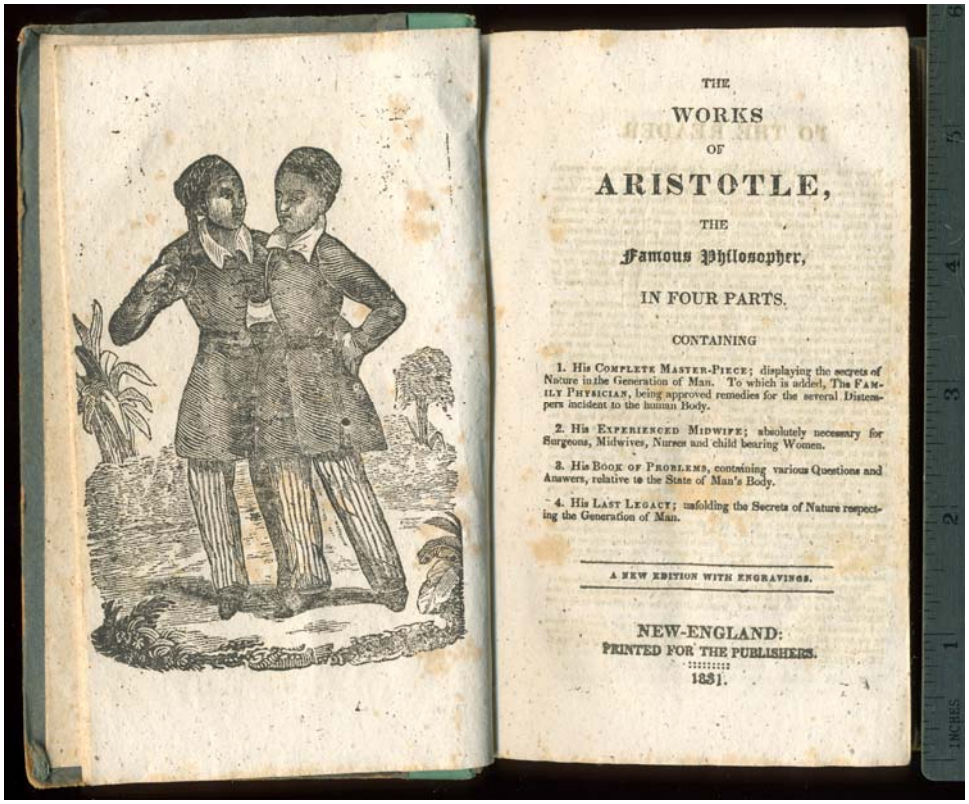
[12] Roy Porter, "'The Secrets of Generation Display'd': *Aristotle's Master-piece* in Eighteenth-Century England," *Eighteenth Century Life* 9 (1984-85): 1-16. For information about colonial reception of the text, see Mary E. Fissell, "Making a Masterpiece: The *Aristotle* Texts in Vernacular Medical Culture," in Charles E. Rosenberg, ed., *Right Living: An Anglo-American Tradition of Self-Help Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) or Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 19-32. Although present in publishers' advertisements past the middle of the nineteenth century, Ashbee did not list *Aristotle's Master-Piece*.

raised printing surface. To print an illustration and text together, a printer carefully locked both in a form upon a press, inked the surfaces, covered the form with a sheet of paper, and pulled the press bar to force the inked form, paper, and the platen against one another the paper. With all components correctly aligned, the force transferred a mirror image of both raised elements onto paper.

Woodcuts in colonial and post-Revolution America could be fashioned from abundant native woods and required only low to moderate skill to prepare. The technique used to produce them differed little from vignettes that served as illustrations in the fifteenth-century.[13] Portraying the hairy beings and physically deformed children that resulted from unnatural sexual practices and uncontrolled imagination, many editions of *Aristotle's Master-Piece* adhered to designs in previously printed versions. The recut blocks sometimes varied in techniques for shading or by reversing the positions of characters, but artisans generally closely followed the original concepts being copied.

Through the nineteenth century, publishers increasingly downplayed the vernacular images and strove to satisfy reader interest in science and human anomaly. Reducing the number of traditionally included illustrations or eliminating all images helped reshape the book as a still-relevant treatise through which laymen could acquire medical knowledge. In other cases, public awareness of anatomical curiosities could be leveraged to generate book sales. Taking advantage of the public sensation stimulated by the American tour of conjoined twins Chang and Eng in the early 1830s, one publisher

[13] *Liber Chronicarum* (1493), more commonly known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, used more than 600 illustrations of various sizes to enliven its narrative of the world's history. Certain of the small portraits and urban vignettes served several times over to depict different monarchs or cities mentioned within the text. Especially in the use of undistinguished illustrations as generic representation, *Aristotle's Master-Piece* resembles the *Nuremberg Chronicle*.



THE
WORKS
OF
ARISTOTLE,
THE
Famous Philosopher,
IN FOUR PARTS.
CONTAINING

1. His Complete Master-Piece; displaying the secrets of Nature in the Generation of Man. To which is added, The Family Physician, being approved remedies for the several Distempers incident to the human Body.

2. His Experienced Midwife; absolutely necessary for Surgeons, Midwives, Nurses and child bearing Women.

3. His Book of Problems, containing various Questions and Answers, relative to the State of Man's Body.

4. His Last Legacy; unfolding the Secrets of Nature respecting the Generation of Man.

A NEW EDITION WITH ENGRAVINGS.

NEW-ENGLAND:
PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHERS.
1831.

Fig. 6.2. *The Works of Aristotle* (1831)

prepared a frontispiece of the pair for an 1831 edition to increase sales (fig. 6.2). Even the modern age revealed examples testifying to the relevance of folkloric wisdom.[14]

The method for carving woodcuts placed limits on the accuracy and artfulness with which an image could be transformed into a printed illustration. Drawing a knife towards the body, a craftsman removed non-printing areas from the plank. Using a knife discouraged detailed shading but proved adequate for carving thick lines that could withstand the force of a press. Cutting against the plank's grain resulted in jagged edges, and cutting along with the grain often produced swerving lines when the tool followed the plank's direction. Woodcuts, inferior wood engravings, and engraving on soft type

[14] *The Works of Aristotle, the Famous Philosopher, in Four Parts* (New-England: Printed for the Publishers, 1831), held by author.

metal supplied the illustrations for less expensive publications, such as pamphlets, through the middle of the 1800s in America.

Copper and steel engravings filled the demand for high-quality prints to be sold singly or manufactured to illustrate books. Early American intaglio artisans copied the work traditions, images, and technologies of English engravers.[15] The production of engravings, whether on wood or metal, separated the labor of drawing from that of implementing the design in another material. English workers excelled at precise craftsmanship on metal. It took skill to transfer penciling or brush strokes into incisions and textures, although that talent was interpretive rather than creative. "The artist is to the engraver what the author is to the translator," wrote a nineteenth-century printing expert, noting the disciplined craft knowledge required to faithfully reproduce an image in one medium while working within the confines of another.[16]

American printers proudly advertised the superiority of their prints by asserting their adherence to English patterns as well as methods. The widespread inclusion of graphic elements in print fostered growing skills among American artisans, who could produce portraits of prominent citizens, maps, or of city scenes upon demand. More frequently, books from abroad supplied the images with which domestic draughtsmen worked. Books with fine typography or with subject matter that called for pictorial elaboration especially merited complementary illustrations.

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[15] American printing practices generally lagged behind those of England by a decade in the early nineteenth century. At mid-century, American printing was quite similar to England, and by the last quarter of the century, the United States had surpassed its competition. An outstanding resource covering all processes in England is Michael Twyman's *Printing 1770-1970, an illustrated history of its development and uses in England* (1970; reprint, London: The British Library, 1998).

[16] W.W. Pasko, ed., *American Dictionary of Printing and Bookmaking: Containing a History of These Arts in Europe and America, with Definitions of Technical Terms and Biographical Sketches*, intro. by Robert E. Runser (1894; reprint, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1967), 174.

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, the engraving trade became well established, especially in Philadelphia. The number of artisans in that city nearly tripled in a single decade, counting thirty-five engravers among the population by 1800. That number more than doubled by 1818. The growth of the trade in other cities followed apace, albeit with fewer total craftsmen through the early decades of the 1800s, aided by the immigration of tradesmen from other countries.[17]

Intaglio printing required that the image area be produced on lowered portions of a metal plate. Using a combination of gravers, pointed tools, or acid treatments, the draughtsman copied an image onto a copper or steel plate. By the end of the eighteenth century, numerous techniques had been developed to convey outlines and create shades across large areas. Line engraving made use of the force of a graver or burin pushed away from the worker's body and across the face of a metal plate. Digging just deep enough to force metal out of its path, the tool made grooves and created metal burrs. Draughtsmen worked over a plate with sharp dry point tools, the end of a graver, or a roulette to create dots or patterns for stippled shading effects. Slightly blurry lines of acid etching softened an illustration. The tonal techniques of mezzotint and aquatint emphasized qualities found in oil and watercolor paintings rather than the severe accuracy of line engraving.[18]

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[17] Rollo G. Silver, *The American Printer, 1787-1825* (Charlottesville: Published for the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia by The University Press of Virginia, 1967), 152-153 and 170.

[18] Line engraving proved especially useful for intricate details and machinery illustrations, and stippling frequently enhanced portraiture, especially in book illustrations. Dry point, graver tip, or roulette left characteristic patterns: rounded punctures, triangular or rhomboidal indentations, or rows of any number of patterns created from the teeth of the roulette's rolling edge. Etching allowed an artist-like "drawing" of an image with a pointed tool; repeated acid baths bit lines of many depths onto a metal plate. Nature illustrations especially benefited from the varied depths and slight blurriness of the bitten lines. Mezzotint mimicked oil painting with its rich black tones and is described later in this paper. The fifth technique, aquatint, imitated water coloring. The engraver traced an image onto a plate, then selectively applied a protective solution to highlight areas. Through a series of applications and acid baths, gradations in tone could be achieved. Aquatint gave depth and added interest to the backgrounds of topographical prints. Each of these methods, and especially aquatint, relied upon the final insertion of line details with a graver or

To accomplish the transfer of images with incised techniques, the printer warmed the metal plate, spread ink across its face, and gently rubbed ink down into the grooves. A final careful wiping removed ink from upper surfaces without scooping it out of the incisions. The printer placed paper on top of the plate and inserted both into a powerful rolling press, which applied pressure to a narrow stripe of the pair to force the paper into the inked grooves. This process created on the paper a mirror image of the incisions as well as a characteristic indentation exactly the outline of the plate. The plate mark and raised feel of the print's lines are two features of intaglio printing.

Illustrations printed in this manner had to be inserted into books by hand, usually between gatherings but sometimes in more precise locations. More costly and laborious than woodcuts, engraved prints also fetched a higher price and endowed a book with a higher level of quality.[19] When done well, engraved illustrations imbued a publication with sophistication, regardless of whether the content of the text closely matched that of the illustration. Excellence in typography rather than in engraving was more often the case in American books through the 1800s, however.[20]

Copper engravings in *A Sentimental Journey* showed a combination of slightly awkward but detailed intaglio prints with a superior literary text. Published in 1795 in New York as a two-decker, the novel follows the adventures of a gentleman through various levels of society as he travels through France and Italy. The title page ascribes

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other sharp instrument. All are engravings, but the use of any technique used in conjunction with incised engraving gives its name to an illustration.

[19] Excellent sources for learning about these technical processes are Arthur M. Hind, *An Introduction to the Woodcut* (1935; reprint, New York: Dover Press, 1963) and *A Short History of Engraving and Etching* 3rd ed. (New York: Dover Books, 1963). For a concise explanation of woodblock techniques, see Douglas Percy Bliss, *A History of Wood-Engraving* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1928), 1-9, aptly subtitled "An Elementary Account of the Technique of Woodcutting and of Wood-Engraving Which Must Be Read." The best overview of printmaking processes is by Antony Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking: An introduction to the history and techniques* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[20] Silver, *American Printer*, 158-159.

authorship to Mr. Yorick and to Eugenius, respectively, but the pseudonyms refer to Laurence Sterne, author of *Life and Opinions of Tristam Shandy*. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Americans would have been more familiar with Sterne's work through expurgated editions of his writing published as *The Beauties of Sterne*.[21]

Aristotle's Master-Piece, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (better known as Fanny Hill), and *Sentimental Journey* formed a troika of early American erotic books. "As the eighteenth century came to a close, Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* was published in editions both intact and expurgated, and in the eyes of many book buyers was regarded as simply high-level erotica," according to publishing historian John Tebbel.[22]

One unedited American version of Sterne's book advertises on its title page "Elegant Engravings" in the 316-page tome. The anonymous publisher delivered proficiently executed illustrations with the slight "unintentionally comic look" that historian Rollo G. Silver noted as a characteristic of American engravings in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Self taught or poorly trained, American artisans gained more of their experience engraving household items than illustrations. They also lacked urbane sensibilities. Judged by the standards of domestic engraving, the illustrations in Sterne's book were among the best offered by the American trade at the time.[23]

The 1795 edition contains seven copper plate engravings that can be separated

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[21] Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (New-York: Printed for the Booksellers, 1795), held at AAS. Frank Luther Mott noted that Sterne's later fame as author of *Tristam Shandy* did not exist during his own time; the book achieved best seller status only through incremental increase in sales over the next century as a growing number of readers became fascinated by its unconventional narrative style. *Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), 41. Also useful for studying this genre, if somewhat dated, is James D. Hart, *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Taste* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

[22] John Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, vol. 1, *The Creation of an Industry, 1630-1865* (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1972), 151.

[23] Silver, *American Printer*, 154.

Fig. 6.3. *A Sentimental Journey* (1795)

into two groupings. The frontispiece and one tipped in illustration could have fit into any number of erotic novels. The pair show a gentleman and a lady of the mid-1700s embracing in a courtyard with the woman's dress arranged to expose her breasts, and the pair again, without such exposure, among others conversing on a town avenue. The second set exhibits less ability to convey perspective but includes sexually graphic and highly suggestive subjects, as well as a wider range of social classes among characters.

Engravings depict scenes of sexual intercourse by a wigged gentleman and a woman in two scenes (fig. 6.3) and one each of breast fondling by a man on the pretense

of checking a heart beat, "accidental" fondling of a lady's waiting maid by a night-shirted sleeper, and a woman outside her carriage at roadside *toilette*. Engraved captions under all seven engravings give textual references, but a different model of handwriting appears in each group. The second set of plates shows more wear than the first, indicating that the seven plates had not always been printed as a lot. The engraving of the pair shown at the right in *Figure 6.3* appears to be a less skilled copy of that on the left. The engraved writing on the former matches that of rougher styles in the second group.[24]

Wear patterns confirm that the plates are of copper, consistent with the book's 1795 dating, and Boston or New York engravers probably produced the plates. The emerging trade centers of New York and Boston proved to be more fertile ground for contracting engraving work and at cheaper prices. During the early 1790s, virtually all Philadelphia engravers – and certainly the prominent ones – were occupied preparing plates for Thomas Dobson's *Encyclopedia*.[25] While the early erotica trade involved Philadelphia through mid-century, production and distribution increasingly became centered in New York and Boston for books considered "rich, rare, and racy."

Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure

Printed in 1749 for G. Fenton of London, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* captured a ready audience in England as well as other countries. The novel sustained its popularity during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and remains well known today. Cleland's narrative traces the journey of Fanny Hill, an orphaned country girl, through a

[24] Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society. The sleeping chamber scene conveys the hinted-at meaning of a facetious passage in which the protagonist, after teasing his audience, claims to have touched the hand of a lady's maid who was monitoring a sleeping chamber in which a woman and man slept in separate beds.
[25] Published between 1790 and 1797, the eighteen-volume English reference set demanded enough artisans to churn out more than 500 illustrations. Silver, *American Printer*, 153-154.

series of sexual adventures that never detract from her pure heart. At the conclusion of the novel, she reunites with her first and true love who, early in the book, had enabled her to escape from a London brothel. Charles forgives her past, and Fanny, now wealthy, becomes a virtuous wife. A master of metaphor, Cleland's success lay in his narrative skill and ability to sustain the erotic interludes without specifically sexual language. Nonetheless, publishers of the book found themselves frequently prosecuted.[26]

Eighteenth-century Americans had to import *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Prominent American printer Isaiah Thomas attempted to order the book in 1786 from a London supplier who declined to send a copy but suggested that a ship's captain might bring the English item back to America for Thomas. Whether Thomas followed his bookseller's advice is unknown, but three decades later Americans were not forced to go to such lengths to procure the novel. By 1813, they had printed the book themselves.

Benjamin Gomez of New York City proffered illustrated copies of what likely was an imported work in 1798. Possibly as early as 1805 and certainly by 1810 at least one American printer, most likely in the Boston vicinity, published the first two sheets of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. The title page bore a playful false imprint, ascribing the publication to G. Felton of London in 1787. Apparently caught and reprimanded while the work was in press, whoever was responsible for the edition ceased labor, leaving the edition unfinished. [27]

Within a few years, another publishing attempt emerged. The earliest documented completed American edition of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* was printed in 1813.

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[26] Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Catena Librorum Tacendorum* (1885; reprint, New York: Documentary Books, Inc., 1962), 60-91 extensively records various publications of this work and its prosecution.
[27] John Cleland, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Written by Herself. Vol. 1 (London [Boston?]: Printed for G. Felton, in the Strand [Office of Munroe & Francis?], 1787 [ca. 1810], held at AAS. Sheets contained in Cleland, BDSDS 1810, AAS Manuscripts.

Although identified by its imprint as the seventeenth edition of G. Fenton's London book, the illustrated 1813 title originated in America, according to bibliographical scholars David Foxon and Marcus McCorison.[28]

Two Vermont men gained notoriety in 1816 and 1817 for having published a pair of large paper illustrated editions of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Printed with generous margins, books described as large paper implied luxuriousness and the ability to pay for paper strictly for aesthetic effect. The suspected publishers and engraver were all Americans, but the complaint lodged against them apparently did not result in prosecution. The complaint provided to the governor described the book to the governor as having either seven or ten explicit plates of illustrations, perhaps indicating that the book was known of but not actually seen by the complainant. The discrepancy may relate to the existence of two different configurations of binding for the book, suggesting the intention of producers to present the book in varied forms to reach different markets.[29]

The next publisher proved less fortunate. Peter Holmes, a West Boylston man from near Boston, came to the public's attention in 1818 and 1819 with his indictment, and conviction for selling *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* and an illustration from the book. He paid a steep cost for his participation in the trade, being held to a $300 fine, $75.53 in court costs, and a $500 bond to ensure that he would deal no longer in obscene literature. Holmes appealed his conviction, resulting in the precedent *Commonwealth* vs. *Holmes* that affirmed his conviction and established the book's obscenity.[30]

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[28] M.A. McCorison, "Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure or Fanny Hill in New England," *American Book Collector*, n.s., 1 (May/June 1980): 29-30. The copy that McCorison and Foxon examined is held by Yale University.

[29] Marcus A. McCorison, "American Bibliographical Notes," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 82 (April 1972): 65-66.

[30] The first American obscenity case was *Commonwealth* v. *Sharpless* (1815), 2 Serg. & Rawle 91 (Penn) in which a lewd print exhibited for a fee in a private room was declared a disturbance of the peace in

A year after Holmes's sentencing, wheelwright Stillman Howe stood indicted and at trial for selling obscene material. A typescript of the indictment survives, providing a clearer description of an early American edition of the book, its inclusion of an illustration, and the workings of early nineteenth-century legal systems against the book's distribution. Prosecutors accused Stillman Howe of "being an evil disposed person, and devising, contriving and intending, the morals, as well as youth, as of divers other good citizens of the said Commonwealth, to debauch and corrupt, and to raise and create in their minds, inordinate and lustful desires…." The indictment further charged that on September 20, 1818, Howe:

> unlawfully, wickedly, maliciously and scandalously, did utter, publish and sell to one George Perry, a certain lewd, wicked, scandalous, infamous and obscene print on paper, representing a man in an obscene, indecent and scandalous posture with a woman; which said lewd, wicked, scandalous, infamous and obscene print was then and there contained in a certain printed book, then and there uttered, published and sold by him the said Stillman Howe to him the said George Perry, entitled "Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure"; to the manifest corruption of the morals of youth and other good and virtuous citizens of said Commonwealth; against good manners and good morals, to the evil and pernicious example of others in like case to offend, and against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth aforesaid….

Howe pled not guilty, but the court found otherwise. Howe was sentenced to spend a day in solitary confinement, followed by a six-month term at hard labor at the Worcester County House of Correction.[31]

Others also followed Holmes and Howe in their activities and punishments. An 1820 newspaper account reported that three additional Boston men, not identified, paid $100 fines and served a month in prison for selling an unnamed book deemed obscene.[32]

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violation of common-law obscenity statutes. In *Commonwealth* v. *Holmes* (1821), 17 Mass. 336, the court's ruling upheld the conviction of Holmes, declaring *Memoirs of a Woman of Leisure* obscene.

[31] Undated typescript, Cleland, BDSDS 1810, AAS Manuscripts, and McCorison, "Memoirs," 29-30. Quote from same source.

Several false imprints that have survived from the first several decades of the nineteenth century testify to the continuing publication of erotic novels despite increased prosecution. In the American Antiquarian Society's collection, one clandestine publication bears the imprint "Halifax, (Novia Scotia) [sic]: Printed by G. Fendon, for W.H.S. Fillman, 1820." Ornamental type on the title page suggests that the page was composed in the shop of an established printer with an investment in foundry materials. The title page subtly references Stillman in the reported printer's name and directly points to the book's origin in an earlier English edition.

The text reveals significant editing compared to the first twelve pages of the American publication whose printing was suspended about 1810, perhaps shortening the narrative to accommodate the printer's available materials. Purchased in fonts of a specific design and size, the type that a printer owned limited the number of jobs that could be undertaken at the same time. Producing books required printers to carefully balance the amount of type available, the work schedule for projects, and paper supplies. A single engraving remaining from the plates advertised within that book remains. That wood engraving depicts a smiling man and woman entwined in an explicit sexual act. Produced with moderate ability, the nakedness and amorous expressions of its subjects is striking. Surrounded by columns and drapery, they enthusiastically engage in copulation upon a divan, with the background providing a classically-inspired setting for their congress. Tipped in adjacent to page 132, a textual reference was printed beneath the unsigned engraving.[33]

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[32] *Carlisle* [Penn.] *Republican* (May 23, 1820), from Cleland, BDSDS 1810, AAS.
[33] John Cleland, *The Memoirs of Fanny Hill, A Woman of Pleasure* (Halifax [Novia Scotia] [sic]: Printed by G. Fendon for W.H.S. Fillman, 1820), held at AAS. The Fendon edition of 158 pages fits 36 lines onto a page slightly larger than that used to print 40 closely-leaded lines of the Felton imprint, discussed below.

That illustration bears a similarity to the description in Howe's 1818 indictment for selling an obscene book. False dating on the book makes determining the timing of its publication difficult, however, and the title page claims additional artwork not present in this copy. Despite the publisher's linkage of the illustration to the text by adding a page number under the wood engraving, legal authorities in Boston noted the image in their indictment of publishers as a separate element from text. Parts of a book rather than the item as a whole could be recognized as conveying content that disturbed the peace, and legal syntax recognized each contributing element to that danger.

Text much more closely following this earliest American copy of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* appears again during the same period. A second American edition bears the facetious imprint of "London: G. Felton's Press, in the Strand, 1832." The title page contains no ornamental type but a variety of roman fonts. Following the Halifax production, the 1832 Felton edition ascribes its engravings to a member of the Royal Academy. More title page jibes link copyright to the Royal Family and misspell the publisher's name to match that of the unfinished edition from the opening of the century.

These humorous deflections would have failed to convince Americans that the book was of English origin. Paper-covered wooden boards protected the text, indicating domestic production. The abundance of wood in North America and the dearness of paper in British colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries inspired the use of wooden boards to cover books. Thinly-planed wooden covers called scabboard (from the original name scaleboard) were frequent in New England during the colonial period when leather or pasteboard, produced from layers of paper bound together, were not available. A single sheet of paper pasted onto the wooden covers made scabboard binding more

respectable. Pasteboards became more available after the Revolution, making wooden boards less common, but through the first two decades of the nineteenth century, only the most inexpensive books utilized scabboard. After 1820, wooden covers are exceedingly rare. The use of scabboards for binding rather than pasteboards in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* presents either a late incidence of that binding style or the printing of an advanced date on the title page. When taken together with the rough illustrations used throughout the book, scabboard binding points toward a date earlier than 1832.[34]

The book contains seven rough wood engravings of sexual intercourse or activity, linked to the text by page numbers printed below each illustration (fig. 6.4). Printed on paper smaller than that of the adjacent pages, the prints are tipped in where convenient to the binder – between gatherings and close to the stated page references. Cut with attempted perspective, the illustrations share a similar style in their predominantly straight shade lines, simple background elements, and disproportionate sizes for the heads of most of the subjects.[35]

The general technique uniting the unsigned illustrations indicates the work of a vernacular American artist rather than foreign production. Such work would have been consistent with an amateur draughtsman of the early Federal period of the United States rather than an accomplished engraver. The spirited, unrefined style of these engravings

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[34] John Cleland, *The Memoirs of Fanny Hill, A Woman of Pleasure* (London [United States?]: G. Felton's Press, 1832), held at AAS. Caribbean books were sometimes protected by scabboards, although with much less prevalence than the colonies that eventually became the United States and Canada. Their use was discontinued after the end of the eighteenth century, making the appearance of scabboards after 1810 very unusual. AAS holds a few examples of late scabboards on American imprints, including an early semi-erotic work translated from the French of Stéphanie Félicité Genlis, *The History of the Duchess of C----* (Baltimore: Printed for the Booksellers, 1819). Birch, Maple, and oak were among those woods used for scabboard. See Hannah Dustin French, "Early American Bookbinding by Hand, 1636-1820," in *Bookbinding in America: Three Essays*, ed. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1967), 13-14 and 50.

[35] Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

Fig. 6.4. *The Memoirs of Fanny Hill* (1832)

continued to be common through the 1840s in cheaply made books, but, as Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt noted, "…the presence of crude work in an American book after 1800 meant that the best resources of the time and place had not been utilized by its publisher."[36]

The number of illustrations and the untrained engraving techniques that produced them give some indication that this book might be the Vermont edition published in 1816 or 1817. The purported engraver, Isaac Eddy, prepared "very obscene plates," according to two complaints sent by Daniel Coolidge to the Vermont governor in early 1818. Coolidge noted that Eddy was widely known as an engraver, although he was not a

[36] Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America: A History of the Making and Selling of Books in the United States*, 2nd ed. (New York: R.R. Bowker Company: 1952), 92.

particularly skilled workman.[37] The plates in the false imprint of 1832 are consistent in major details with those of the illustrated edition that drew the outrage of Coolidge. Although state courts and citizens began recognizing the existence of an American-based trade in erotica in the 1810s and certainly by 1820, a growing perception attributed the hazard of a flood of obscene goods to products from abroad rather than home.

Lithography

The new printing process of lithography and French artisans were the core of that menace in the 1830s. Ascribing an ominous use of "the democratic art" to a foreign country legitimated the relationship of printing to broadening literacy and republican values in America. It recognized the excellence of French artists and excused the lag of transferring skills to American printing. At the same time, connecting indecent uses of print with foreign sources distanced American printing and government support for the industry from decadent uses of technology.

The German printer Alois Senefelder discovered the principles of lithographic printing around 1798. He reportedly discovered the principle of lithography after carelessly writing a laundry list in grease pencil on a piece of limestone in his printing office. He began to experiment with the repellant properties of grease and water, according to the legendary origins of the technique. Like several others in the waning years of the eighteenth century, Senefelder attempted to develop a method of etching stone to provide a long-lasting substrate for engravers. He incorporated experiments

[37] M.A. McCorison, "Two Unrecorded Prints of *Fanny Hill*," *Vermont History* (Winter and Spring 1972): 64-66 and 174. Cleland, BDSDS 1810, AAS Manuscripts. For a brief biographical entry about Isaac Eddy, see George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, eds., *The New-York Historical Society Dictionary of American Engravers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).

about repellant and attractive properties of stone into his work with acid treatments. Senefelder soon determined that actual planography, or flat printing, could be achieved through a chemical process. The porous qualities of limestone readily available in a quarrying region of Bavaria offered an optimal surface.

Senefelder's explication of his discovery and its possibilities substantiated his claim to the invention of lithography. In his authoritative 1818 treatise, translated the next year into English, he anticipated virtually all materials and methods for planographic printing that since have been utilized. Charles Hullmandel and Godefroy Engelmann, English and French printers, produced their own manuals about the same time.[38] American lithographers used these handbooks as guides, importing techniques and supplies from England and France before the Civil War.[39]

Lithography takes advantage of the repellant characteristics of grease and water, and with the absorptive properties of the substances used as printing plates. Bavarian limestone excels as a material for the process because it absorbs grease and water equally well. By drawing upon the stone with a crayon or grease pencil, the stone receivs oil in areas to be printed. Treating that image with a fixative stops the grease from spreading out into the limestone and makes the design permanent. The remainder of the stone retains its ability to absorb water.

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[38] Senefelder projected the repellant process to be applicable to stone and metal plates, with or without acid etching, and as an offset process using an intermediary material. Alois Senefelder, *A Complete Course of Lithography: Containing Clear and Explicit Instructions in All the Different Branches and Manners of that Art: Accompanied by Illustrative Specimens of Drawings. To which is prefixed a history of lithography, from its origin to the present time…, translated from the original German of 1818* (London, 1819). A modern reprint of this book is available (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968). Charles Hullmandel's manual, *The Art of Drawing on Stone* (London, 1824), also remains readable and informative. See also Godefroy Engelmann, *Manuel du dessinateur lithographe ou description des meilleurs moyens à employer pour faire des dessins sur Pierre dans tous les genres connus* (Paris, 1822).

[39] For the history of early lithography in England and France, see Michael Twyman, *Lithography 1800-1850: The techniques of drawing on stone in England and France and their application in works of topography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).

In the early nineteenth century, an artisan wet the stone and applied ink with a roller to the entire surface. Only the areas with oily marks retained the ink. The printer then placed paper on top of the stone and pressed the two together with a scraper, paddle, or hand. The force transferred the image from stone to sheet. The flat surfaces of planography only rarely produced an indentation from the first brush of the pressing blade against the stone.[40]

English and French artists attempted the new process energetically in its first two decades, taking advantage of the freedom to use drawing techniques or crayons for painterly results. The deft penciling and quick drawing of original works onto the printing surface made it possible to imitate skillfully pen-and-ink drawings, paintings, and charcoal sketches. Artists themselves drew on the stone, rather than providing a design for a draughtsman to follow, and the stone proved remarkably receptive to any touch of the pencil or crayon. With due care taken not to contaminate the stone, drawing was relatively simple. Printing did not match that ease, however. Balancing the chemical processes to consistently produce the nuances and shading of the stone-drawn originals challenged printers, nonetheless.

By about 1820, printers began to use the chemical printing process for wider commercial purposes, such as mass-produced government documents written in script or illustrations for popular audiences. However, the process was incompatible with other types of printing that relied upon height differences to separate printing and non-printing areas. In letterpress printing, carved wooden blocks or type projected ink-bearing

[40] Lithographic plate marks are rare and much less noticeable than intaglio plate marks (discussed below), according to advice provided by Michael Twyman, professor emeritus, University of Reading, England. Occasional, faint marks are left along the leading side of the sheet being printed when the scraping device makes contact with the paper and underlying stone.

surfaces above the rest of the form in which printing material was placed. Intaglio forced ink into grooves and used pressure to transmit an image.[41]

Relief and intaglio printing worked on mechanical principles, using pressure to transfer ink from raised or lowered surfaces onto paper. Planographic plates were incompatible with either process, isolating lithographic illustrations from more traditional ways of printing text unless the two elements were printed apart and bound together or the same sheet was run through two different presses.[42]

For these reasons, lithography competed relatively little for book illustration and only indirectly for the growing periodical market compared to wood engraving. Bewick's engraving process, not lithography, was compatible with letterpress printing. That relief process produced the bulk of all nineteenth-century books and periodicals in Europe, England, and America. Senefelder's method "was always the step-child of the mass printing industry since it deals in images rather than words," writes art critic Beatrice Farwell.[43]

Inadequate for producing the volume of text necessary for literature, lithography popularized a new kind of book called the pictorial album. Separate engravings or lithographs could be placed together in a book-like form, but lithography became the technique of choice for pictorial codices. After an English publisher bound together

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[41] See Peter C. Marzio, "American Lithographic Technology Before the Civil War," in ed. John D. Morse, *Prints in and of America to 1850* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press for the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1970), 215-252, esp. 222; and Twyman, *Lithography 1800-1850*.

[42] Lithography, also called polyautography for its ability to multiply handwritten documents, could be used to print manuscript-like duplicates or drawn type, enabling artists to incorporate some text into lithographic prints. Having to delineate text backwards negated the advantages of lithography for mass-produced print, however.

[43] Beatrice Farwell, *The Cult of Images (Le Culte des Images): Baudelaire and the 19th-Century Media Explosion* (Santa Barbara: University of California, Santa Barbara Art Museum, 1977), 7. A catalog for the exhibition "The Cult of Images (Le Culte des Images)" held April 6-May 8, 1977 at the University of California, Santa Barbara Art Museum in cooperation with the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

lithographic illustrations as a book in 1807, the genre of albums depicting topographical, natural science, city, and railways views came into fashion. The albums served as vehicles for collecting illustrations centering on a single theme, with minor contextual text added. After limited trials with these books of lithographs, English bookmakers quit using planography for much of the rest of the century. French lithographers, on the other hand, experimented in the 1810s and 1820s with the art books, sometimes bringing together several topics within one album. The *voyage pittoresque*, or landscape album, which recorded artistic renderings of historic sites and landscapes, became fashionable.[44]

Pictorial albums comprised a segment of the explosion in French lithography from the 1820s to the 1840s. Firms such as Aubert offered lithographs in several forms. An artist's work might be published as a single print in a periodical or several bound into albums without accompanying text. The *Paris comique* style depicted the fashions, sins, and eccentricities of notorious characters in Paris life, with the prints of several artists accompanied by text with little or no association to the illustrations. The company thus put older material to use in publications for which caricatures chiefly interested readers.[45]

Combining strong artistic elements and commercially popular themes, French lithographs fed a wide demand for cheap decorations and amusing social caricatures. The great French lithographers eschewed book illustrations and dabbled in newspaper images. More often they created individual or series prints.[46] A large number of the lithographs produced by major French artists depicted love relationships, from an acknowledgment of

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[44] Jacqueline Armingeat, "The Illustrated Book," in *Lithography: 200 Years of Art, History & Technique*, ed. Porzio Domenico, trans. Geoffrey Culverwell (Secaucus, N.J.: The Wellfleet Press, 1982), 223-239, esp. 224-225.

[45] "Aubert remarked that the resulting hodgepodge had 'a plan that is easy to follow, for it consists in not having any…,' "according to Gordon N. Ray, *The Art of the French Illustrated Book, 1700-1914* (1982; reprint, New York: Pierpont Morgan Library in association with Dover Publications, 1986), 236.

[46] Armingeat, "The Illustrated Book," 227.

attraction between the sexes to illicit sexuality. Partially or completed disrobed, the female figure became a topography to be explored in nature's surroundings, in parlor romances, or in scenes of imminent discovery. In France, amorous and erotic prints chiefly supplied markets for wall hangings or pictorial albums.[47]

Imported into the United States during the 1830s, those albums brought romantic and sophisticated lithographic art to American consumers. In contrast, common wood engravings of American artisans seemed amateurish. Picture albums became the center of a general commerce in erotic paraphernalia in several cities, Boston among them. Despite the convictions of publishers who marketed John Cleland's novel, that city continued to be an active market for obscene prints. In the mid-1830s, merchants in Boston, Lowell, Portland, and Portsmouth were among those involved in a vigorous and lucrative business selling albums, pictures, and obscene snuff and music boxes. Costing from $25 to $60, at least some of these items exhibited excellent workmanship. Their discovery in 1834 prompted prosecutions for obscenity, resulting in several local convictions.[48]

Interest in pictorial albums and associated erotic products was strong enough that not everyone agreed prosecution should be a high priority for government officers. Boston's Judge P.O. Thacher expressed concern that government figures publicly express support for purging local markets of morally suspect items. His eagerness for leaders to make firm the boundaries of social behavior implies that obscenity did not uniformly disturb the peace in Boston. The degradation of public values was at risk when material

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[47] Beatrice Farwell, *French Popular Lithographic Imagery 1815-1870* 7 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 1-3 and 5. Of this twelve-volume set, volumes one (Lithographs and Literature), seven (Love and Courtship), and eleven (Pin-ups and Erotica) are the most relevant for research in this area. For information about the work of Devéria, Tassaert, and Maurin, who were among the most established of French erotica lithographers in the 1830s, see volume eleven.

[48] "Destruction of Indecent Prints" in *Mercantile Journal* [Boston: 1835], BDSDS 1835, AAS. The following section derives from this source.

dangerous for weaker members of society to consume was not condemned by all, he asserted. To stem the threat, officials needed to make clear their opposition to the spread of obscene print.

"To publish or sell obscene books or pictures, tending to corrupt the morals of the People, is an offence against good order and government, for what tends to corrupt and destroy our youth, affects all our citizens in the tenderest point, and injures all," he wrote. Visual depictions comprised an especially powerful entry into the hearts of the most vulnerable members of society. "Images of vice presented in an alluring form, to the mind of the young and inexperienced, are calculated to corrupt the heart, which is the seat of all good and evil." Thacher and others asserted that a large number of very skillfully designed and colored pictures had been imported furtively. The secrecy with which the trade operated proved that participants anticipated the negative reaction of upstanding citizens, he wrote.

A raid upon one vendor turned up 400 "diabolical articles" worth a total of $1200 to $1500. The goods varied greatly in value, with some being considered quite expensive for the period. Indicted in the April term of the Boston City Court in 1835 for selling lewd prints, a plaintiff named John L. Gourgas failed to appear to contest the charge, forfeiting by his absence a $2000 recognizance. The confiscated items were destroyed with Judge Thacher's approval, who noted that "the law doth not protect obscene prints or other publications injurious to good morals; nor allow them to be sold as an article of traffic, or exhibited for money or for any base purpose—and that they ought to be destroyed as a common nuisance…." The prints were burned before the month was out.[49]

[49] "Destruction of Indecent Prints," AAS. Even art depicting no sexual activity but revealing the lack of clothing associated with classical mythology might be considered indecent by certain Bostonians of the

A newspaper writer from the *Mercantile Journal* celebrated that vendors of such items had been discovered and punished. Legal consequences for such activity stemmed the immoral actions that naturally flowed from viewing lewd pictures, according to the writer. More people remained to be brought up on charges and had not yet been named in public, and the continued efforts of decent citizens would be necessary completely to stop the considerable business. "Indeed the traffic for a few years past has been carried on to an extent which will hardly be believed," the editor wrote. "There is reason to suppose that it has now received a check, which will long be felt, but as the cupidity of some unprincipled men, will induce them to run any risks or punishment of disgrace, in order to increase their wealth, the moral portion of the community should be on their guard against the repetition of this diabolical offence."[50] Despite that editor's hopes, an emerging trade in erotic images and literature became increasingly noticeable in America during the 1830s, emerging as a subset of the larger print culture.

Imported erotic lithography was a commercial venture; likewise, the field of lithography in America found firmer ground through commercial exploitation rather than through the experimentation conducted by artists. American printers whose efforts revolved around artistic reproductions accounted for many of those who did not succeed in the early years of domestic lithography. By the 1840s, the shift away from employing the technology for fine art was in full swing. Those committed to the difficult trade of lithographic printing retained their profitability only by closely reading consumer

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time. The public display of nudity at art exhibitions shocked some viewers, inspiring the addition of temporary aprons on the subjects of "The Chanting Cherubs," a sculpture by Horatio Greenough. See David Tatham, "D.C. Johnston's Satiric Views of Art in Boston, 1825-1850," in *Art & Commerce: American Prints of the Nineteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 9-24 and esp. 16-17. Printed proceedings of a conference held May 8-10, 1971, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

[50] "Destruction of Indecent Prints," AAS.

preferences and widening their buying audience. Marketability became the guide in printing decisions. Artists of note involved in the trade typically refused to sign their works because of the stigma of being involved in a mass-production process with significant commercial overtones.[51]

Nathanial Currier became the founder of one of the largest and most profitable enterprises in the trade. He began his career working in New York shops of the 1830s and worked his way up to being an industry leader, and Currier's history offers instruction in the general practices of lithographers of the period. His first solo print in 1835 recorded a hotel fire in New Orleans, and that foray into pictorial journalism helped propel his success. Like other lithographers, he responded quickly to public demand for cheap prints that brought news, entertainment, and novel decorations into American homes. He increasingly provided designs to draughtsmen who sketched on the stones rather than drawing himself. Currier became partners with James Merritt Ives, and the firm they established in the late 1850s lasted for five decades. They marketed more than 7,000 designs ranging from Western scenes to urban bustle, seafaring ships to farms, and war heroes to wildlife. Adding color to enliven the prints but keeping products cheap through the lower wages of female colorists, Currier found a ready market. Enduring in that industry required commercialization, and Currier's ability to speedily market news illustrations and sentimental snapshots of American life soon ensured his success.[52]

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[51] Janet Flint, "The American Painter-Lithographer," in *Art & Commerce,* 127-142.

[52] John Lowell Pratt, ed., *Currier and Ives: Chronicles of America* (Maplewood, N.J.: Hammond Incorporated, 1968), see esp. 13-15. Even in his first efforts, Currier turned around work at a precocious pace to best his competitors. Within four days of a December fire at the Merchants Exchange, his prints of the disaster were already being hawked on street corners (108). See also Harry T. Peters, *Currier & Ives, Printmakers to the American People*, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1929-1931). Volume 2 provides the standard checklist of prints by the firm.

Instead of hand coloring prints, Louis Prang's shop focused on constructing an image through sequential printing in different colors. Workers drew the same image on multiple stones, then printed a single color from each stone, closely registering each sheet to build up the image. As many as twenty to twenty-five stones could be required for complex work, and the process of completing a print might take months. In contrast, hand-colored lithographs relied on assembly lines of women who each brushed a color onto a black-and-white lithograph. Even at the height of popularity for Currier & Ives after the Civil War, the establishment typically used manual processes. Hand presses rather than those powered by steam churned out most of the firm's work at the rate of 200 to 250 black-and-white prints per hour. The firm produced some chromolithographs to compete with Prang, but hand coloring remained the norm. Manually painting on color obviated the need to estimate color separations, draw multiple stones for each color, set pins identically in each stone, and register numerous impressions. Currier & Ives paid female colorists $1 for a dozen prints of about 19" x 28" and sold the lithographs for between $1 and $1.50. In contrast, the large Prang lithographs sold for $10-12.[53]

A host of other lithographers plied the trade, but none dominated the market for low-cost decorative prints like Currier & Ives. Initial drawings on the stone, chemical preparation, printing, and coloring each added a factor to be controlled, priced, and marketed, and the quality of prints produced by other printers varied enormously. Few prints from lesser shops have survived. Harry T. Peters's compendium of sample prints by minor lithographers, produced by Peters to counterbalance his own scholarly volumes

[53] Marzio, "American Lithographic Technology," 242; Marzio, *The Democratic Art: Pictures for a 19th-Century America, Chromolithography 1840-1890* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1979), 59-60; and Linda C. Hults, *The Print in the Western World: An Introductory History* (Madison, Wisc.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 709.

documenting the activities of Currier & Ives, lists H.R. Robinson was among those smaller entrepreneurs who competed for the public's favor. His importance to American lithography has been significantly underestimated, according to Peters.

Robinson was not an apprentice of Currier, as historians of print have speculated; instead, Robin's work may have inspired the man supposed to be his mentor. Robinson's strength lay in his chief occupation of political cartooning, and "it was his cartoons, broadcast, that encouraged Currier to spread out and later even to enter this field himself." Henry R. Robinson's thriving business as publisher of political caricatures, news pictorials, and crime scenes melded into work considered by many to be indecent, proving that Boston had no monopoly on the latter.[54]

The growing lithography trade provided an outlet for political cartooning in the 1820s, bolstering the number of prints that caricatured public officials.[55] Known for his lithographs of social commentary, portraits of prominent men and women, and his pro-Whig illustrations, Robinson's business activities crossed the line of respectability about 1836. In that year, he took part as a printer in the publishing frenzy surrounding the sensational trial of a young New York clerk for the murder of Helen Jewett. Jewett's notoriety as a widely-known courtesan inspired lurid reporting of the trial, and the publisher issued lithographs emphasizing her seductiveness.[56]

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[54] Harry T. Peters, *America on Stone: The Other Printmakers to the American People; a Chronicle of American Lithography other than that of Currier & Ives, from its Beginning, shortly before 1820, to the years when the Commercial Single-Stone Hand-Colored Lithograph Disappeared* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1931), 337-342, esp. 341. Peters's collection of prints by the numerous competitors to Currier & Ives has left historians with a valuable reference source for locating examples of minor nineteenth-century American lithographers.

[55] Nancy R. Davison, "Andrew Jackson in Cartoon and Caricature," in *American Printmaking Before 1876: Fact, Fiction, and Fantasy* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1975), 20. Papers presented at a symposium held at the Library of Congress, June 12-13, 1972.

[56] Timothy Gilfoyle, *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992) 92-99.

Fig. 6.5. "Ellen Jewett, 1836."

Robinson's illustrations competed with an onslaught of penny press coverage. He produced three lithographs of the Helen Jewett murder, the most important being the portrayal of "Ellen Jewett, 1836," which Peters described as being "of a pioneer nature" in their importance to the tabloid press. Within days of Jewett's murder on April 9, 1836, Robinson published a small black-and-white lithograph of the prostitute topless in the bed in which she was killed (fig. 6.5).[57] Portraying Jewett without the severe head injuries that caused her death and minimizing the effects of a fire set to cover up her murder, the intention behind the portrait was to eroticize the news event. Writers in the penny press considered the lithograph both indecent and an inaccurate portrait of the beautiful and intelligent Ellen Jewett, yet the image became a public face of the woman's death.[58]

[57] Peters, *America on Stone*, plate 121.

[58] Patricia Cline Cohen, *The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in Nineteenth-Century New York* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998) analyzes the lithographs and the artistic portrayal of Jewett (268-273). Her book offers an illuminating history of the context of the affair between Helen Jewett and her accused murderer Richard Robinson (no relation to the lithographer). Both Ellen and Helen are names used to refer to the victim throughout news accounts of her life.

Realizing the profit of portraying scenes of seduction, Robinson applied his business acumen in coordinating the production of black-and-white lithographs and their hand coloring to the field of lewd prints. He was already well connected with the trade, with a stable of artists and relationships for importing lithographic materials from abroad. In addition to publishing prints, he may have imported them along with his orders for lithographic materials, of which Americans produced little domestically.

Reliant upon foreign sources for limestone, inks, and probably presses, he certainly was aware of French trends in lithography. Robinson might have purchased French lithographs for albums from his import contacts. As a lithographer, he could have copied the designs and reproduced them easily. In the confines of a printing shop, the exposure of illicit work could be kept relatively quiet. A single image could be drawn quickly, printed over several days by a single pressman, then erased by grinding the limestone down while preparing a smooth surface for the next illustration. Purchasing material for obscene prints and arranging with workers to produce more expensive hand-colored prints could have been integrated into his daily operations.

He managed to weave a large number of illicit illustrations into his publishing activity. A small lithograph of "Madame Lecompte. The Prosecuted Picture … 1838" depicted a partially clothed woman to be printed with a crime story in the periodical press. Robinson published "a number of small, undated sentimental and fancy prints," according to Peters.[59] He finally drew the attention of authorities in the early 1840s. Upon his arrest, police discovered thousands of prints and books in his possession.[60]

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[59] Peters, *America on Stone*, 340-341.

[60] *People vs. Henry R. Robinson et al.*, 28 Sept. 1842, District Attorney Indictment Papers, Court of General Sessions, 1790-1879. The papers are held at the New York City Municipal Archives and Records

Robinson proved to be a resilient entrepreneur. Despite having his offending stock confiscated, the erotica portion of his business closed, and having his name entered in the public record as a potential supplier of obscene prints, Robinson continued his work as a lithographer of political cartoons and varied small lithographic jobs. He resumed his occupation with success and worked at least until 1849 before dying in 1850.[61] Robinson's ability to persevere despite his arrest seems all the more remarkable because of the turbulence in the lithography trade during the 1830s and 1840s, during which American printing concerns failed regularly. The ready availability of second-hand equipment from abortive ventures had its own effect on the lithography industry, thwarting incentives for Americans to innovate. Instead of developing new lithographic press designs, American mechanics continued to rely upon those of France and Germany, which could be manufactured easily of wood. English cast-iron presses supplemented the Continental models.[62]

American lithographers gained protection for their industry through a convoluted route prepared by tariff policy. At the same time that Robinson incurred legal penalties on the state level, Congressional committees discussed proposals for an Anglo-American copyright agreement and tariff revisions to promote domestic industries. Securing the right of British authors to their works when published in the United States would promote domestic authorship, argued proponents of the agreement. Americans would gain similar

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Center. Thanks are due to Georgia Barnhill of the American Antiquarian Society for suggesting this reference for Robinson's activities.

[61] Although numerous lithographs by Henry R. Robinson exist, none of those considered indecent at the time appear to have survived. The American Antiquarian Society holds more than 160 prints published by Robinson between 1832 and 1849, but none of his erotic prints appear to be held by research institutions.

[62] Marzio, "American Lithographic Technology," esp. 222.

protection for their literary efforts published in England. Stipulations requiring domestic production to take advantage of the arrangement protected American industry.

Opponents asserted that the great need of Americans was for authors to make knowledge readily accessible rather than original. Even though American authors were pirated in England, far more of the reprinting took place in the opposite direction. Copyright agreements between the two countries thus would limit the distribution of material required by American newspapers and magazines while making books more expensive to acquire.

European literary products helped to sustain monarchial government, according to signers of a memorial who appealed to Congress. American publishing rather should democratize science and knowledge to support a nation of free people. "Is it not safe and better to let in this literature freely, but subject it to the moulding of our wants and wishes, rather than to give it an ascendancy, and entrench it behind the inviolable privilege of copy-right?" asked petitioners opposed to international copyright.[63]

Authors appeared to be a special interest to be benefited at the expense of the American reading public, more than 41,000 workers employed in printing and publishing, and the family members of those tradesmen. Copyright reform faltered, but Congress passed over a presidential veto a tariff that gave preference to domestic industries. In a barely discussed section, the Tariff of 1842 also banned "all indecent and obscene prints, paintings, lithographs, engravings, and transparencies" from importation into the United States. President Tyler in his December 1842 message to Congress admitted the need for revisions to the swiftly passed tariff. He expressed concern that the tariff would divide

[63] 27th Congress, Sess. II, S.R. 323, "Memorial of a Number of Persons Concerned in Printing and Publishing, Praying an Alteration in the mode of levying duties on certain books, and remonstrating against the enactment of an international copy-right law."

the country by privileging some sections over others. High tariffs would encourage smuggling, he added. However hard the government might try, it would not be stopped.[64]

Revisions were, indeed, made during the following year. The president's prediction that the rigid legislation would promote illegal activity proved correct, but in a somewhat different aspect than he had anticipated. The legislation banned erotic English engravings and French lithographic albums rather than illicit literary products because of the tariff's specific focus on pictorial forms. During most of the nineteenth century, lithographic presses, inks, and prints fell into general *ad valorem* tax categories that assessed duties based upon the declared value of goods. Immigrant craftsman were allowed to bring in their personal tools without levy. Lithography itself received no special note in any section other than the proscription on importing obscene pictorials.[65]

The tariff appears to have slowed significantly the flow of French prints into American hands as intended, but least some prints continued to be available. A rare album of lithographs from about 1850 in an American binding of that period surveys ancient Pompeiian life through carefully colored lithographs that imitate watercolored paintings in the style of the well-known frescoes of Pompeii.[66]

The wall paintings found during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in that city depicted nudes, sexual activities, and phalluses alongside images of the city's daily life and of landscapes, according to Walter Kendrick. The apparent normality of sexual decadence during the apex of Roman civilization challenged notions that such behaviors

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[64] 27th Congress, Sess. III, S.R. 1, "Message from the President to the United States to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Third Session of the 27th Congress," Dec. 7, 1842, 7. For the Tariff of 1842, see *The Public Statutes at Large…*, 27th Congress, Sess. II, Chapter 270, 566-567.
[65] Marzio, *Democratic Art*, 90-92.
[66] "Album of 55 exquisitely colored lithographs and watercolor drawings in the style of Pompeiian frescoes" ([Italian?], ca. 1850), offered for sale by James Cummins Bookseller Inc. in *Catalogue 92*, New York, Spring 2005.

had caused the fall of the Roman Empire 300 years later. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the existence of explicit wall paintings had become apparent to archaeologists, and soon frescoes and Priapian artifacts were segregated from public view. In the late 1820s and later, more digging regularly unearthed brothels. The term "pornography" came into use at mid-century to describe the production of prostitution-related images, such as those of Pompeiian frescoes and objects that required segregation from public view.[67]

The Philadelphia firm of Pawson & Nicholson, among the better known American binderies of the nineteenth century, bound together an album of lithographic prints and watercolors of Pompeiian scenes produced around 1850. The fifty-five hand-colored scenes include a range of nature, mythological, domestic, and decorative themes, with a small number of nudes sprinkled among the prints. The album offered "several images of an openly erotic nature suggestive of the relaxed style of Pompeiian attitudes toward nudity" and may have been produced in Italy, according to the bookseller's catalogue of James Cummins. A bindery ticket ties Pawson & Nicholson to a custom three-quarters red morocco binding of fine goat skin. Imported prints such as those in the album became American through their domestically-produced bindings.[68]

Interest among Americans in acquiring pictorial albums thus continued despite the ban on their importation. Additionally, the supply for illicit lithographs followed the law of unintended consequences: Making foreign prints more difficult to procure protected domestic producers of the same items, bolstering the American trade. The bookmaking sector that benefited most from the interdict was not lithography, however, but wood

[67] Walter Kendrick, *The Secret Museum: Pornography in Modern Culture* (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1987), 1-32.
[68] James Cummins, "Album of 55."

engraving. Increasingly skillful and efficient technique for reproducing images compatible with printing text through wood engraving joined the sophisticated steel engravings and artistic lithographs often used as frontispieces for indecent books. The Tariff of 1842 opened the door for American forms of erotica to flourish along with the capability of its print trade workers.

Steel Engraving

Although lithography offered advantages over copper engraving, the chemical art was in many ways a more difficult printing process to learn than intaglio. Hand-operated lithographic and rolling presses produced only a few hundred prints a day, but planography stood up better to long-run printing. Grease pencil drawings were easier to prepare than an engraving and could be drawn directly on the stone, eliminating intermediary labor. In contrast, copper plates showed signs of wear after several hundred impressions; requiring engravers to enhance lines or shading as the printing progressed. English artisans struggled to improve engraving and to compete with an art that relied heavily upon German limestone and French inks. Metallurgical developments helped in countering lithography, providing a soft steel to replace copper. Somewhat more difficult to engrave than copper but much more resistant to wear after being hardened, steel plates could print tens of thousands of impressions without refurbishment.[69]

In the 1820s, American printers began to turn to the steel process for engraving. The hard metal accepted alteration by traditional tools familiar to copper engravers and produced large runs of prints without diminishing quality. Americans adapted English

[69] Bamber Gascoigne, *How to Identify Prints: A complete guide to manual and mechanical processes from woodcut to ink jet* (1986; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), unpaged, section 12 a-c.

practices, creating innovations for highly specialized processes. Jacob Perkins pioneered multi-color printing with closely aligned engraved plates for printing currency that could not be duplicated. Both he and William Congreve applied to provide the Bank of England with a new currency printing method to replace lithography, which had proven to be insufficient for secure printing. Planographic printing fulfilled the need for large-scale printing but could be copied too easily by unauthorized printers. Although the bank selected Congreve, Perkins' method became a long-lived process for printing the postage stamps issued by the American government.

Another American attempt to deter counterfeiting transferred three-dimensional images from medallions onto steel plates. Waterman Lilly Ormsby gained fame for inventing the grammagraph, a steel ruling machine that converted varying heights of an image into lines. The machine automated an existing engraving technique that varied spaces between parallel contour lines to give the impression of depth to a print.[70]

Among books, steel engravings provided primarily line-and-stipple portraits in the English style for frontispieces and competed with lithographs. Stippling dots and lines retained their fineness in the hardened plate without becoming dull from the compression of printing, ensuring continuity of an image across thousands of prints. Selecting a design with wide public interest helped to ensure that a publisher gained full advantage from a plate's longevity. Anti-Catholic exposés of the 1830s offer examples of competing illustrations.

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[70] Elizabeth Harris, "Jacob Perkins, William Congreve, and Counterfeit Printing in 1820" in Morse, ed., *Prints in and of America*, 197-214. See also James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, eds., *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 6 vols. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1887-1889); and Glenn B. Opitz, ed., *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors & Engravers*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Apollo, 1986), 683.

The ways in which publishers applied different technologies hints at divergences in their marketing strategies. Mainstream tradesmen contributed their skilled efforts to publications focusing on the purported biography of the former novitiate Maria Monk. Two of the American publishers who introduced the American public to Maria Monk in *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk* familiarized readers through illustrations with the woman and the convent from which she purportedly escaped.

Large firms like Harper Brothers of New York City declined to put their names on the book for fear of angering their Catholic customers. Two employees of Harpers with a history of publishing books, typically with a Protestant purpose, undertook the task. Howe & Bates printed a first edition in 1836 with a dark but sympathetic frontispiece of the heroine (fig. 6.6). Taken from an oil painting by George Linen, the well-executed illustration portrayed her wearing a simple dress and shawl, with expressively large eyes and surrounded by heavy shadowing. Stephen H. Gimber, the draughtsman, credited Linen at the lower left as delineator and himself at the lower right as sculptor. Printed text in a block handwriting below the illustration reads, "Bring me before a court." Both the illustration and the book were printed in New York City, where Gimber worked during the same decade.[71]

To match that publication, the firm of Hoisington & Trow offered a foldout plan of the nunnery in its edition of *Awful Disclosures* dated 1836 on its title page. The

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[71] *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, as exhibited in a narrative of her sufferings during a residence of five years as a novice, and two years as a black nun, in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery at Montreal* (New-York: Howe & Bates, 1836), held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society. The publishers of the book were, in fact, employees of Harper Brothers. One commentator asserted that the copyright holder received a fee from the publication of different editions and that the Harpers paid Maria Monk $80 for every 1,000 books printed. See G. Vale, *A Review of the Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk. In Which the Facts are Fairly Stated, and Candidly Examined* (New York: G. Vale, 1836), 24. For more information on the history of the novel, see Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk, *A Veil of Fear: Nineteenth-Century Convent Tales by Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk*, Nancy L. Schultz, ed. (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1999).

Fig. 6.6. *Awful Disclosures* (1836)

diagram of the nunnery grounds and an elevation of the Hotel Dieu incorporated tiny identifying type placed carefully inside each wood engraving before the illustrations were stereotyped.

Other processes could have been used but were not. Maps usually were engraved on copper in the 1830s. Lithography would have been more likely than metal engraving because of the amount of text in small letters, which could have been drawn far more easily than engraved for intaglio. However, wood engraving allowed the publisher to make the process faster although somewhat less precise by joining together a wood engraving and type in one illustration. Coordinating all production within letterpress processes allowed Hoisington & Trow to produce the book quickly, without having to

rely upon additional print shops to create and print the plate. Time was of the essence in supplying the market for Maria Monk books.[72]

The publishers may have misdated the edition to compete with the actual 1836 publication of the book by Howe & Bates. Material added to the earlier text makes clear that the other firm's publication went on sale first. Hoisington & Trow's combination of a supplement and a convent schematic with the actual text demonstrates an attempt to cash in on the book's popularity by claiming additional important information in a new edition. The schematic of the grounds, providing a visual aid to help readers ascertain the facts of Maria's narration, fed into the raging debate between supporters of Maria Monk and those of the Church.

Hoisington & Trow advertised their edition of *Awful Disclosures* as being for sale generally by booksellers. A follow up publication, *Further Disclosures*, arranged for specific bookseller partnerships. Leavitt, Lord, & Co. in New York sold the book, as did firms in Boston and Philadelphia, as well as smaller companies across the country. Although the illustration also hid the identity of the artist, a well-known draughtsman and inventor of the grammagraph, took credit for the engraving. W.L. [Waterman Lilly] Ormsby prepared the frontispiece of a nun holding in her arms an infant with strikingly similar facial features (fig. 6.7). With a head covering shading her eyes and her head bent forward to avoid the gaze of viewers, the portrait's subject hid her shame over having borne a child. Steel engraving produced a more meticulous but less warm portrait of the woman than lithography.[73]

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[72] *Awful Disclosures, by Maria Monk of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal, revised, with an appendix, containing, Part I. Reception of the first editions. Part II. Sequel of her narrative. Part III. Review of the case. Also, a supplement, giving more particulars of the nunnery and grounds. Illustrated by a plan of the nunnery, &c.* (New-York: Hoisington & Trow, 1836), held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

Fig. 6.7. *Further Disclosures* (1836)

A technique that could supply a huge demand for frontispieces suited the quantities of Maria Monk books printed; reportedly, sales for the various publishers reached into the hundreds of thousands. Ormsby's design traveled along with the book to England, where an abbreviated edition was published as *Confirmation of Maria Monk's Disclosures*, with the London imprint of James S. Hodson. Ormsby's name remained on the London edition's frontispiece, emphasizing the transatlantic transfer of image and text for the astoundingly popular book.[74]

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[73] *Further Disclosures by Maria Monk, concerning the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal; also, her visit to Nuns' Island, and disclosures concerning that secret retreat. Preceded by a reply to the priests' book, by Rev. J.J. Slocum* (New York: Published for Maria Monk, and sold by Leavitt, Lord, & Co.; Boston: Crocker & Brewster; Philadelphia: Desilver, Thomas, & Co., and sold by the booksellers generally throughout the United States, 1837), held at AAS and LOC. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

[74] American labor patterns, technologies, and literature have been influenced significantly by borrowing (or pirating) from foreign, and especially English sources. The transatlantic transfer of art and words from England to America has received much more study than the reverse. For the classic study of the dual

It is unlikely that the plate itself was exported to England for printing in that country; English printers had a well-known antipathy to working with foreign woodcuts or engravings. Prints may have been shipped from New York, where both Ormsby and Leavitt, Lord, & Co. did business. Alternatively, an English draughtsman may have reengraved the illustration and, as was customary, credited the original workers.

Publications about Maria Monk meant profits for publishers, with sales of the books far exceeding those of previous anti-Catholic works. Rebecca Reed's *Six Months in Convent*, published in 1835, responded to anti-Catholic mob violence near Boston. An arson fire at the Ursuline Convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, in August 1834 had been spurred by reports that female inmates were held involuntarily in the Catholic institution. Those local events catalyzed interest in accounts denouncing monastic life. Published by Russell, Odiorne & Metcalf of Boston without illustrations and distributed through firms in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and elsewhere, the book never achieved the success of Maria Monk's novel. Point holes in surviving copies indicate production on slower platen presses, hinting that the publisher may have anticipated brisk but not overnight demand for the book. Greater success remained for *Awful Disclosures* to achieve the following year.[75]

Maria Monk's tale followed the popular style of gothic novels, blending intricate descriptions of the Montreal convent's maze-like interior with lurid assertions of indecent

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directions in which literary works traveled, see I.R. Brussel, *Anglo-American First Editions. Part One: East to West, Describing First Editions of English Authors Whose Books were First Published in America before Their Publication in England. Part Two: West to East, 1786-1930, Describing First Editions of American Authors Whose Books were Published in England before Their Publication in America*, 2 vols. (1935-36; reprint, New York: Sol Lewis, 1981). Most American versions noted in the east-to-west section were not arranged by publisher agreement, while those that moved west-to-east were, according to Brussel.

[75] Rebecca Theresa Reed, *Six Months in a Convent, or, The Narrative of Rebecca Theresa Reed, Who was Under the Influence of the Roman Catholics about Two Years, and an Inmate of the Ursuline Convent on Mount Benedict, Charlestown, Mass., Nearly Six Months, in the Years 1831-2* (Boston: Russell, Odiorne & Metcalf, 1835), held at LOC and by author.

behaviors forced upon innocent female victims. Novitiates suffered cruelties for small infractions; forced sexual relations resulted in the destruction of infants born on the premises and their concealment in a lime burial pit.

Backed and written by J.J. Slocum, William K. Hoyte, and Theodore Dwight together, published accounts that claimed to reveal Maria Monk's travails quickly inspired intense competition among the real authors and other publishers. Versions of the novel resurfaced throughout the nineteenth century despite proof that the story was false. Reprints of the originals and follow-ups by other authors most frequently added wood engravings or lithographs of wood engravings if illustrations were present, although the occasional edition featured chromolithography.[76]

In his investigations of the accusations and inspection of the nunnery where Maria Monk reported her internment, William L. Stone, a Protestant, came to the conclusion "that the book of Miss Monk is a vile and infamous fabrication" and the reputed author responsible for criminal wrongdoing unless she claimed to be suffering from mental illness. No proponent of Roman Catholicism himself, Stone nevertheless rejected virulent anti-Catholic literature. Books such as *Awful Disclosures* and *The Escape of Sainte Frances Patrick* promoted evil in many ways, he wrote, the greatest of which was to

[76] Wood engravings were included in the derivative work of Samuel B. Smith, *The Escape of Sainte Frances Patrick, Another Nun from the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal. To Which is Appended a Decisive Confirmation of the Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk* (New-York: Office of the Downfall of Babylon, 1836), held at AAS; one version of an edition of *Awful Disclosures* (New York: Horner & Bates, 1851) contained a three-color chromolithographed title and gilt illustration. Undated imprints held by the author with T.B. Peterson's information on the title page but a London colophon indicating foreign printing exist with frontispiece and title page vignette wood engravings (*The Mysteries of a Convent. By a Noted Methodist Preacher. Also, The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*), and lithographed frontispiece of a wood engraving with wood engraving vignettes throughout (*Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk; or, The Hidden Secrets of a Nun's Life in a Convent Exposed!*). The latter appears in an identical edition issued with a halftone lithograph of the same frontispiece enlarged.

inspire a surge of Catholic fervor. Baseless accusations and intolerance by Protestants only fed Catholic allegiance to the Pope.[77]

Thus fortified with a rationale for publishing a view that opposed Maria Monk's autobiography, Howe & Bates offered in that same year the rebuttal. Minimizing the main title by placing it in small type beneath larger fonts highlighting "Maria Monk," "Nunnery of the Hotel Dieu," "Convents," and "Montreal," the firm published Stone's findings. If that venture absolved the firm of contributing to the pro-Catholic backlash that attended the distribution of *Awful Disclosures*, it also guaranteed Howe & Bates financial success. Not content to profit in the mid-1830s from producing reports for Protestant societies, Mohawk translations of the Bible, and the original *Awful Disclosures*, the partners followed the path to profit. For publishers of indecent books, that route became increasingly crowded.

Wood Engravings

Wood engravings appeared more frequently in popular literature than any other type of illustration in the nineteenth century. Copper and steel engraving exuded precision, and American artisans became increasingly capable at working on metal. Yet the difficulties of fully integrating intaglio into letterpress remained. As early as 1780, Thomas Bewick began experimenting with a new method of engraving in England. When fully developed in the early decades of the nineteenth century, his work and the loyalty of his followers his style helped initiate a major shift in illustration techniques for publications. Wood engraving produced a letterpress-compatible illustration that could be

[77] William L. Stone, *Maria Monk and the Nunnery of the Hotel Dieu. Being an Account of a Visit to the Convents of Montreal, and Refutation of the "Awful Disclosures"* (New York: Howe & Bates, 1836), held at AAS.

integrated into mass-produced texts. A single press could print both. The merger of high-quality images with text figured prominently in the upsurge of periodical literature and books in the 1830s and 1840s in Europe and America.

During the last two decades of the eighteenth century, Bewick began reproducing finely detailed artwork on a woodblock. His two-pronged innovation exchanged a particularly hard wood called boxwood for planks, and tools similar to those of an engraver for knives. Using the end grain of a block and pushing the gouge away from his body, Bewick removed non-printing areas and left fine lines that could withstand more significant pressure than those carved along the plank side of wood. When supplies of boxwood were not available, end-grain blocks could be assembled by firmly gluing together planks of any hard wood and slicing off squares from the composite ends.

Bewick also initiated a white line style. Rather than eliminating large non-printing areas as in woodcuts, he incised white grooves to create thin ink-bearing lines. Bewick's white line style was distinctive, and technique and visual effect developed alongside one another. Delicate white line engraving required more carefully formulated inks and their application. Bewick's technical innovation enabled him to develop an intricate, expressive style emphasizing black through its proximity to whiteness. More importantly, wood engraving resulted in a raised surface that could be printed along with type to produce high-quality reproductions.[78]

Later wood engravers followed a simpler style that imitated copper engraving, but the possibilities of endgrain engraving had been opened for draughtsmen. With the incompatibility of visual and verbal elements resolved and a new style initiated, only the

[78] For a short biography of Thomas Bewick, see Douglas Percy Bliss, *A History of Wood Engraving* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1928), 179-193.

issues of the time needed to prepare large blocks and their endurance under increasing press speeds remained. An artist typically provided the drawing for an engraver to rework onto a wood block. The artist who turned concept into sketch garnered more fame than a craftsman who transferred the image, however highly detailed, into incisions on a block.

As publishers sought out greater sizes of artwork to stretch across newspaper columns, the time required for an engraver, or sculptor, to complete a design grew. By 1840, an English method for hastening the cutting of illustrations developed. An artist drew a design directly onto a block, which then was cut into pieces and farmed out to several engravers. When completed, the pieces were bolted together tightly and touched up to diminish stylistic differences.[79]

Through stereotyping and its successor, electrotyping, exact metal copies of woodblocks could be made. Americans experimented by 1811 with the French process of stereotyping. Using type metal plates made from plaster of Paris molds, Americans addressed a domestic shortage of printing type and embraced stereotyping. The process made printing surfaces durable and portable as solid plates. Slightly harder than type metal and cast as a unit that could be imposed rapidly, the plates were ideal for long press runs and gave publishers much greater flexibility for reprinting matter at will.

Stereotyping proved only adequate rather than superior for wood engravings, however. Stereotyped illustrations lost their sharpness more readily than copies of type. Plated illustrations became blurry with considerable printing, making them less valuable for extending the life of wood blocks called for by newspapers and books. In the early 1840s, a new galvanic process allowed the duplication of type or wood engravings with

[79] Mayor, *Prints & People*, "A quarter turn of the wood," at ills. 636-639 (unpaged). The separation of labor evolved into a specialization of forms, with experienced engravers taking on more detailed work, such as faces, tapestry, or machines. Butchers were those who specialized in musculature, for instance.

copper or steel facing rather than foundry type metal. Called electrotyping, this process frequently became applied to type duplication and available for copying wood engravings by the end of the decade.[80]

A wood engraving on boxwood could withstand hundreds of thousands of impressions on a hand press, but even that more durable material wore more quickly on power presses. Cylinder presses especially caused blocks to crack. The thin line of pressure upon which a cylinder machine's entire force was focused at the moment of impression tested the strength of an engraving. Stereotyping and to an even greater extent electrotyping made it possible for an engraving to withstand pressure from ever-more powerful machines.

Illustrations in editions that plated art along with running titles, page numbers, signatures, or narrative became part of the text. Small vignettes could be shaved from a plate if damaged or deemed undesirable, but large pictures had to remain in a book. Removing full-page illustrations required a publisher to reset the type, renumber the pages, and create a new edition. If copied as an independent plate, an illustration could be added as an integral part of the book by printing it on the same sheet as the text or inserted. It also could be inserted after being printed on the same or different paper. Illustrations printed on leaves with a blank verso wasted a page that could be used for type, but their inclusion left untouched the original numbering of the book, giving

[80] Lehmann-Haupt, *Book in America*, 81-82. Michael Winship, "Printing from Plates in the Nineteenth Century United States," *Printing History* 5, no. 2 (1983): 15-26. For a history of the people and techniques involved in North American stereotyping written for the trade, see chapter six of George A. Kubler, *A New History of Stereotyping* (New York: George A. Kubler, 1941), 147-225. The importance of stereotyping to American printing – which was considerable – is discussed in chapter eight of this dissertation. Bibliographers call most mid-nineteenth century plates stereotypes unless a publisher's business records indicate otherwise. It is in theory possible to tell electrotyped and stereotyped plates apart, but in practice virtually no bibliographer risks making the distinction without external evidence.

publishers more flexibility. The independence of plated illustrations facilitated their easy deletion and exchange, according to a publisher's needs.

Plating allowed illustrations to be transferred to other publications, tying a draughtsman's work to the business strategy of the owner of the final copy. Paid by the finished drawing, block, or plate, artists and engravers lost control of their labor after transferring an image onto paper, stone, wood, or metal. This distancing discouraged producers from signing illustrations that were not large and elaborate or exceptionally detailed. Flaws in plated engravings could, with difficulty, be corrected by drilling out the error, soldering a plug into the hole, and reengraving the face of the plate.

More commonly, workers simply deleted excessively marred areas. Plates could be cut down to size if necessary, further removing details of the illustration's origin such as signatures of the artist or engraver. Those identifications traditionally appeared on the lower left and right of a work, respectively, with "del" preceding the name of the artist and "sc" that of the engraver, or sculptor.

A large number of wood engravings appeared in semi-erotic books in the 1840s through the mid-1850s. Vignettes of lovers kissing or professing their affections to one another appeared on title pages of *Julia* and *The Handsome Cherubino* in the mid-1840s, taking advantage of the relatively new compatibility between art and type. Charles Paul de Kock's amorous stories of life in post-Restoration England and Napoleonic France proved to be popular in America, as well as in England and the author's native France. Called the "literary prince of nastiness" by one critic of French culture, de Kock became a highly marketable author whose name alone inspired interest among connoisseurs of

erotica. "Americans secretly devoured French novels they publicly censured for their morality," writes Henry Blumenthal.[81]

Indecent American books drew from the literary offerings and illustration practices of France and England, with lithographs, wood engravings, and copper or steel engravings added to the majority of publications in the genre, especially in the 1840s and 1850s.[82] In France, crime and sensational literature by de Kock and Eugène Sue became conceptually linked with lithography. References to the authors, their plot lines, and the topics about which they wrote turned up repeatedly in newspaper columns and as elements embedded in lithographic prints. In France, journals like *Le Charivari* brought lithography into the mainstream as not only a method for producing decorative prints but also a text illustration process. The journal printed editions on two separate presses to accommodate the different processes.[83] The growing availability of wood engravings after 1820 and of stereotyping in the 1830s heightened lithography's uncertain relationship to text, particularly outside of France.

Across the English Channel, social satire and political caricatures were most frequently associated with engraving on metal. The linear qualities of engraving better conveyed detail and physical complexity than emotional subtlety. Whether on metal or wood, engraving used parallel lines or dot-and-lozenge shading techniques that favored intricacy of design. Complexity of form matched the tone of England's mass-produced

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[81] Henry Blumenthal, *American and French Culture, 1800-1900: Interchanges in Art, Science, Literature, and Society* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1975), 181-182 and 232. Blumenthal ascribes the moniker to the author as part of a discussion about de Kock written by Gilbert Chinard.
[82] *Julia, or, The Singular Adventures of a Beautiful Girl!* (Boston: Henry L. Williams, 1845) and Charles Paul de Kock, *The Handsome Cherubino; or, Adventures of a General Lover* (Philadelphia: W. Meyers & Co., 1845?). Both held at AAS. As noted earlier, some doubt should be exercised about whether the former is, indeed, the *Julia* listed by Ashbee. Other illustrated titles attributed to Charles Paul de Kock include *The Student's Girl* (New-York: s.n., 1844); and *The Grisettes of Paris; or, Wife, Husband and Lover* ([U.S.]: s.n., [ca. 1845?]). All held by AAS. Connections are not conclusive for those items, either.
[83] Farwell, *Cult of Images*, 122 and 7-11.

improvement literature in the 1830s, typified by Charles Knight's *Penny Magazine.* In the next decade, a growing literature of crime fiction and urban ills began supplanting instructional literature as the topic of mass-produced periodicals. George W.M. Reynolds' serialized city mystery novels became inextricably linked to the use of wood engravings to illustrate text. In the long-running *The Mysteries of London* (1844-1856), Reynolds' entertaining installments featured wood engravings on each week's opening page of text.[84]

The varying size of wood engravings and their ability to be printed as letterpress material encouraged an exceptionally close relationship of graphics and text, making wood engravings part of literate experience during the nineteenth century. "The most profound revolution brought about by the massive use of wood engraved illustration was the way in which wood engraving presupposed an intense relationship between an image and a written text," according to B.E. Maidment. The non-mechanical intricacy of detailed wood engravings made is possible for Victorians "to describe and delineate their increasingly complex and technological world" while offering a compact "visual code built out of long traditions of popular illustration in broadsides, reprinted fiction, pamphlets, and tracts." Readers were familiar with and expected most illustrations to be wood engravings.[85]

America had its own author of city mysteries and scandalous society in George Thompson. His novels "are filled with gore, sex, and perversity to such a degree that Thompson can be identified as the most shockingly sensational and openly erotic

[84] G.W.M. Reynolds, *The Mysteries of London*, Trefor Thomas, ed. (Staffordshire, England: Keele University Press, 1996), vii-ix.
[85] Maidment, *Reading popular prints*, 15. The material so important to wood engraving came in blocks of limited dimensions. Boxwood is more of a large shrub than a tree, and the increasing use of boxwood narrowed the sizes available.

American writer of his day." Writing anonymously or under the pseudonym "Greenhorn," other names, or his own, Thompson claimed to have dashed off more than one hundred titles. The titles of eighty-four book can be linked to Thompson, with about sixty-six appearing to have survived in at least partial form. Fifty-five of Thompson's novels, many but not all of which were noted by Ashbee, have been surveyed for the research at hand. The majority contained wood engravings on interior pages, several possessed either wood engravings or lithographs for frontispieces, and none contained intaglio prints. Examples drawn from *The Countess* and *Julia King* show the main trajectory and variations of styles in George Thompson's work published in book form.[86]

George Thompson's Books

The multiplication of an illustration required its interpretation and transformation through what William Ivins has called the syntax of technique. A painting or drawing created by paint brush, pen, or pencil had to be reconstructed as a printable form in order to multiply an image. Skilled engravers and lithographers recreated the textures, tonal values, and colors of other media on wood, metal, and stone. Each translation produced nuances in the final form in addition to requiring certain types of paper, ink, and printing presses for accurate transference of the image. Syntax, whether in the deception of using one technique to mimic another or in presenting images flawed by the urgency of bringing a publication quickly to the marketplace, carried meaning and became part of

[86] Thompson wrote under a variety of pseudonyms, and strong evidence exists to support his authorship of the books as listed. The only comprehensive Thompson bibliography in print can be found in George Thompson, *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century Life*, eds. David S. Reynolds and Kimberly R. Gladman (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002). Reynolds and Gladman provide an extensive listing of his publications and the repositories that hold surviving copies as well as the only modern reprinting of Thompson works. This dissertation updates several entries, locating copies of *Fast Life*, *Julia King*, and *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings*, as well as copyright information for others.

the conversations among artists, publishers, and readers. Christopher Looby has argued that sensational fiction narratives opposing middle-class norms actually worked to undergird a sense of bourgeois domesticity.[87] In a somewhat analogous way, production techniques mirrored textual complexities that gave characters – and the plot itself – competing identities.

Lithographic techniques offered a chameleon-like range of treatments appropriate to the murky publishing origins of many clandestine publications. As Alois Senefelder predicted in his treatise, an artist with experience wielding a pencil, crayon, or other tools for creating highlights or the impression of texture could mimic the style of virtually any other printing process. One publisher who placed the same pair of frontispieces in separate novels took advantage of lithography's adaptable features to gain a marketing advantage. Texts of *The Countess* and *Julia King* produced between 1849 and 1852 point toward the use of lithography to deceive readers into believing they had purchased books with copper or steel engravings rather than cheaper lithographs.[88]

American lithography of the 1840s and 1850s typically took as its task the depiction of picturesque America, wildlife and horticultural reproductions, music covers, and portraiture. Nathaniel Currier's prints focused on landscapes combining the outdoors and social activity, and firms with experience in high quality hand coloring fulfilled

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[87] Christopher Looby, "George Thompson's 'Romance of the Real': Transgression and Taboo in American Sensation Fiction," *American Literature* 65 (Dec. 1993): 651-672.

[88] George Thompson [The Author, pseud.], *The Countess; or, Memoirs of Women of Leisure. Being a Series of Intrigues with the Bloods, and a Faithful Delineation of the Private Frailties of Our First Men. Respectfully Dedicated to the Lawyers, Merchants and Divines of the Day* (Boston: Berry & Wright, [1849 or 1850]), held at Yale University. Another edition (with completely reset text and frontispieces excised) is: George Thompson [The Author, pseud.], *The Countess: or Memoirs of Women of Leisure; Being a Series of Intrigues with the Bloods, and a Faithful Delineation of the Private Frailties of Our First Men. Respectfully Dedicated to the Lawyers, Merchants and Divines of the Day* (Boston: W. Berry & Co., [1851 or 1852]), held at AAS. The citation for the second pair of frontispieces is George Thompson [The Author, pseud.], *Julia King; or The Follies of My Life* (New York: Printed for the Publisher, [185-]), held at AAS. Dating derived from *Boston City Directories*, 1840-1865; and Berry's copyright claims filed for the two works. The dating refers to production of the text block rather than final binding.

demand for natural science prints. Lithography cheapened the production of elaborately designed sheet music covers as well as the staves and notes that presented great technical difficulty for those setting musical type by hand. Portraiture represented another area of competition between intaglio and planography, juxtaposing the intensity of virtuosic engraving against the deft caricature possible in lithography.

As a linear process, engraving made it difficult for draughtsmen to achieve a gradation of tonal values. Engravers achieved the illusion of gray with black ink through parallel lines, crosshatching, and stippling (dotting the plate with a sharp tool). Two methods for breaking away from the linearity produced by the graver or burin were aquatint and mezzotint. Aquatint produced a single tone especially suitable for large areas such as sky, sea, or landscape. A porous ground protected portions of a plate while allowing acid to etch thin outlines around granules within the dried ground. Areas bitten by the acid captured ink in amounts sufficient to produce a printing tone but light enough to allow the engraving or further etching of the plate.

Mezzotint more effectively achieved rich tones that could be used to great effect for portraits or for scenes where darkness focused the viewer's eye on a central subject. By taking a tool with a rounded edge bearing fine teeth and repeatedly rocking it into a copperplate in several directions, an engraver created burrs over the entire surface of the plate. When inked, the burrs trapped ink and conveyed a velvety black to the finished print. In order to achieve gradation, the artisan worked negatively, bringing the subject out through the erasure of ink-trapping burrs. By smoothing out the plate according to the desired design, an image with rich tonal values ranging from deep black to nearly white could be engraved. Developed in the seventeenth century, popular in the eighteenth

century, and yet out of favor except as a means of reproducing fine art in the early nineteenth century, the process excelled in translating paintings to the printed page.

The delicate burrs degraded easily during printing, keeping the number of prints possible in the low hundreds unless retouching renewed texture and detail to the plate. With refurbishment and skilled printing, a mezzotint plate might render more, however. Using other engraving methods in conjunction with mezzotint techniques might result in perhaps 2,500 impressions. In the mid-nineteenth century, a new process for coating the finished copper plate with steel facilitated larger, and potentially limitless, editions. Purchased mainly by middle-class families as reproductions of master paintings to be framed and hung in parlors, mezzotints became more widely available with the breakthrough of steel facing. During the 1850s, interest in the process renewed.[89]

The Countess (1849) and *Julia King* (185-) feature the same double frontispiece, with each bearing a striking similarity to the features of mezzotint illustrations (fig. 6.8).[90] One illustration depicts two nude women partially covered in blankets conversing in bed, each holding a guitar. Boudoir curtains and bedding fade into blackness around them, highlighting their centrality and the intimacy of their situation. The other picture focuses the viewer's attention on a single smiling woman in bed, with suggestions of stockings nearby and a discrete sheet covering a portion of her pelvis. A hazy male figure leans past the bed curtains toward the reclining woman as if to speak to her, balancing between intrusion and voyeurism. Shading overlaps the square edges of both illustrations, tonal shadows fade rather than rely on crosshatching or lines, and flesh areas seem to rise

[89] A key text for learning about the development and use of the mezzotint process is Carol Wax, *The Mezzotint: History and Technique* (1990; reprint, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996), 15, 23, 106, and 139.
[90] Thompson, *Julia King* (185-). Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

Fig. 6.8. *Julia King* (185-)

out of black rather than being carved. These features of the frontispieces are reminiscent of the mezzotint style, with *The Countess*.[91]

Small details reveal the prints to be other than mezzotints. In the first frontispiece, shading in the upper left appears to reveal the rocker lines of a worn mezzotint plate in which the burrs have been ground down. In the same print, lightly drawn white scratches in the shading in the upper right present a tonal impossibility in that process. Mezzotints cannot produce purely white lines. Only raised areas that do not hold ink can produce that feature in an intaglio print; engraving tools can only smooth out surfaces in ways that leave inexact borders or carve away metal to deepen ink-bearing grooves.

The lack of an appropriate plate mark gives another clue. Neither of the folio frontispieces bears the characteristic indentation of an intaglio print. Typically, the

[91] The frontispieces in Thompson, *The Countess* [1849 or 1850] are, in fact, catalogued as mezzotints by the institutional holder.

intense pressure of a rolling press caused the plate to bite deeply into the paper. When removed, the paper bore a crease between the image and each edge of the sheet, matching the dimensions of the plate. Both sets of frontispieces, which were printed together on the same side of the paper, lack that mark. A plate mark might be absent if the pairs were printed along with others on a larger sheet and trimmed, and printing intaglio engravings in pairs or fours is a known practice in the nineteenth century.

An anomaly can be seen in one of the books, however. The *Julia King* frontispieces bear an outward-facing plate mark at the lower edge. Such an indentation would indicate that the illustrations were printed on a scrap of paper left over from an intaglio print, with the binder carefully trimming the actual plate mark. The printer used lithographic techniques to create the impression of a more exclusive mezzotint; likewise, the remaining plate mark is evidence of deceptive practices for disguising a cheaper print as an engraving. The illustrations are lithographic with a false plate mark. The confluence of these characteristics indicates that the printer responsible for the illustrations had capacities for lithographic printing as well as knowledge about an obscure lithographic technique called *manière noire.*

Following the French term for mezzotint, *manière noire* lithographs represented a blip among many attempts to take advantage of the versatility of lithography. The varieties of methods for applying greasy treatments to a stone allowed the imitation of virtually any other printing process and increased the prestige of planography *vis a vis* engraving. During the 1830s in Paris, several people attempted to coat a lithographic stone with a ground or chalk and then to create an image through the removal of the substance. Building upon the work of a printer named Alfred Lemercier, Edmond Tudot

received recognition for finally succeeding at a lithographic method akin to mezzotint. After covering the stone with chalk in solution or through crayon hatching and pressing tools, Tudot removed portions of the chalk using flannel, wire brushes, pointed tools, and mezzotint scrapers. The technique never caught on outside of Paris, and its novelty quickly passed. By the end of the 1830s, the demise of *manière noire* had occurred.[92]

The frontispieces of *The Countess* and *Julia King* probably made the books more marketable even though the images related only obliquely to the texts of the books. The subject of a courtesan's life tenuously tied text to those pictures. Only the first of those books contains additional illustrations. Louisa, the heroine of *The Countess*, demonstrated a precocious sexuality from a young age. The story follows her from Portland to Boston and then to New York, taking detours to narrate several adventures of women who convened a club of notorious female lawbreakers and courtesans. In the 1849 or 1850 edition that still contains frontispieces, a sculptor named Dick signed three wood engravings on the lower right, with each illustration printed on paper integral to the book. Dick's amateurish skills in his work for *The Countess* diminished the chance that his biography would come down to present historians, as did the fact that his name most likely was more in jest than a reference to a real engraver. He remains anonymous, save for these three rough wood engravings portraying denizens of low life with fat jowls and scenes with little or no shading. Illustrations for potentially objectionable books were rarely signed, and it is difficult to track down the few signatures that did appear.[93]

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[92] Michael Twyman, *Lithography*, 141-144.

[93] Engravers (also called sculptors when referring to prints) typically signed work at the bottom right, often adding the letters "sc" after their names. Artists responsible for providing the image to be engraved received credit at bottom left, sometimes with the abbreviation "del.," or delineator, appended at the end. Nomenclature derived from engraving, and many wood engravers during the nineteenth century adopted these designations. Traceable signatures in this study include: Avery, sc (1853); Dick, sc (1849-1850); Mose, sc (1849); W.L. Ormsby, eng. (1836); Peirce, sc (185-); and F.E. Worcester, sc (1849-1851). Ashbee

Two men, one with a top hat and producing puffs of cigar smoke, watched a middle-aged female "Coffee Saloon Keeper" stir a beverage. The café offered more than refreshments to her patrons. Sweets, tobacco, and alcohol provided distractions in a setting to induce meetings between men and women in which affairs of the heart could be pursued. Through typographic details such as the use of an italic font for foreign phrases relating to amorous activity, the printer highlighted the novelty of erotic activity. At the same time that Thompson's introductory matter to his own work promised to reveal facts about the private lives of women of leisure in a reportedly republican country, the illustrations depicted the seedy aspects of prostitution. "Sow Nance" earned the facetious title of "Keeper of a fashionable brothel." Her bloated, lined face atop a heavyset body suffocated her sitting chair, depicting the roughness of the figures who guided female newcomers to the city into brothel servitude.

A third Dick illustration of better quality shown in *Figure 6.9* refers oddly to a character insignificant to the novel, with production marks reproduced along with intentionally printed material.[94] A white horizontal mar on the last image neatly splits a woman's neckline and face from her torso and hands, indicating the production method. The block to be engraved was drawn on, cut in half, and farmed out to a pair of

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reported that the wrapper of *Flora Montgomerie* embraced a portrait signed by E. Rellman; the only copy of that title known to exist (held by the American Textile History Museum) contains a wrapper and publisher reference that are dissimilar to Ashbee's description, however. Three names gleaned from semi-erotic books sold alongside those of George Thompson but not cited in *Appendix B* are: Berry, sc (1848); H. Egbert, del. (1855); and T & A (185-). The two most comprehensive sources for tracking down nineteenth-century American illustrators are compiled by James F. Carr and by the New-York Historical Society. See Opitz, ed., *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary* and Groce and Wallace, eds., *The New-York Historical Society Dictionary of American Engravers*. The former focuses more on creators of original or well-known work, and the latter, while more comprehensive, has chronological limitations.

[94] George Thompson, *The Countess* [1849 or 1850], 8. Image from Wright *American Fiction Series*, I, 2583.

THE COUNTESS. 77

your fortune be a loser; and you, who repulse me, your best, nay, only friend, who am going to extricate you from all the anxious, distracting cares, and all that reproach, which threatens your days; me, whose tenderness (and I may say it without vanity) is a present chance has made you; and me, whom Heaven, which disposes all things to subserve its wise purposes, is making use of to change your condition."

JO. STRVENS, Louisa's companion.

"He had no sooner said these words, but Heaven, whom he presumed to make an accomplice in his guilt, seemed to punish him by the sudden arrival of Gordon, who, having seen his uncle's carriage round the corner in Suffolk street, in waiting, had opened the front door and, unbidden and unsummoning, had entered the only parlor the house contained, to find my old gallant in the same posture in which, two or three hours before, he had been surprised by Mr. Banger,—that is, on his knee

Fig. 6.9. *The Countess* (1849 or 1850)

engravers. Following conventional styles, the engravers carved their portions, leaving the edges to be merged through additional retouching after the blocks were reunited.[95]

The printer bolted the completed pieces back together, but the stripe on the illustration shows that the bond loosened. The picture's white line resulted from a gap between the blocks. The publisher who commissioned the engravings apparently brought the book quickly, printing from the original wood engraving, which became permanently linked to the text through its stereotyping for a later issue of the book. Had the illustration

[95] Later in the century, wood engravers specialized in specific aspects of portraiture, and blocks were accordingly allotted to those with skills in prominent details, such as faces, machines, or fabric. James Watrous, *A Century of American Printmaking, 1880-1980* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 20.

been stereotyped, its later occurrence also would have displayed the flaw. The lack of a similar gap in a revised version shows that the first edition was produced quickly through a closely coordinated production system with a low level of workmanship.[96]

The frontispieces were removed at some point from a completely reset text of a second edition of *The Countess*. The later version of the novel contains the portrait of Louisa's companion and a barroom fight scene. A new caption identifies the former simply as "Clara Howard," with the subject of the portrait sharing the first but not last name of a member of the club of Venus, about whom events evolve. For this printing, the wood block has been more securely bolted, and the image trimmed on the right side, shaving off a portion of the sculptor's name. These changes indicate that instead of taking impressions from a wood engraving, the printer made use of a stereotyped plate.

In the second engraving, Jake and a bar maid (as identified by the type below the image) scuffle on the floor of a bar, to the amusement of patrons. These actions do not appear in the novel. A slight line running vertically through the image and between words in the caption shows that this unsigned engraving, also, was prepared by dividing the wood block for carving. Type could be joined to woodblocks and exchanged out fairly easily, allowing stock vignettes or portraiture to stand for multiple purposes. The inclusion below the illustration of type that contradicts the book's text suggests that this image also is a stereotype, but with the type not knocked off – perhaps to allow its reuse for the original book, if necessary.

An abysmal wood engraving ascribed to Mose in *Venus in Boston*, another Thompson novel, plays upon a frequently cited name for an urban b'hoy, creating a circularity of engraver and the engraving's subject. Printed integrally with the pages of

[96] Thompson, *The Countess* [1851 or 1852].

the text, the illustration confines the sculptor's purported name to lightly engraved letters inserted into the shadow beneath a foreground bench. More than that of Dick, the work given the name of Mose referred directly to the text by following the author's descriptions of characters. Mose and Dick shared their lack of skill, however. The two leftmost characters appear to have their bodies cut in the direction opposite to which their heads turn. The engraver referred to other Thompson works and may have chosen a pseudonymous name as a play on the character "Jew Mike." A broadside tacked to the wall in the background wittily advertised "Asmodeus in Boston," combining a known pseudonym for Thompson and the location of William Berry, a major early publisher of that author's novels. "Jew Mike" in the illustration narrates a story to his cronies.[97]

H. Egbert, whose art appeared in a book closely associated with Thompson's publications, delineated an illustration in *The Locket*. That book was the first of several popular titles following the adventures of Jack Harold, a youthful and daring young man who became a vengeful arm of justice to villains. Egbert could have wished for more from the draughtsman who transformed a sketch of a nefarious landlord and his female tenant into an incised woodblock. Some areas of the final print, such as the clothing of the wicked Mr. Snarley and a supplicant named Mrs. Hargrave, show moderate talent. Other sections appear totally white, as if deleted to hide gross miscarving. The engraver tooled in rough shading rather than providing even glimmers of images in background ornamental frames.

[97] George Thompson, *Venus in Boston: A Romance of City Life* (New York: Printed for the Publisher, 1849), held at Boston Public Library. Thompson wrote a book titled "Asmodeus" in 1849 or earlier, and he at least once used that name as a pseudonym. He incorporated the fictional demon as a metaphorical guide directing his readers through the underworld of American cities of the day in his novel, *New York Life.*

The picture followed the storyline's tale of the lecherous landlord attempting to extort sexual favors from a female tenant in exchange for leniency on a debt owed but added no further detail, making the illustration more of a decorative element than one that informed viewers of additional details. With a caption but placed in the center of the page with text running above and below, the illustration became an oversized vignette floating within the narrative. As a reference to the helplessness of a virtuous woman at the hands of a man with ill intentions, the illustration captured an established theme of sensational fiction. Through its placement and caption, the printer made the illustration particularly reflective of the narrative. Through stereotyping, the picture became a permanent part of any set of plates made for the book.[98]

A draughtsman named Avery signed a nicely engraved portrait of Kate Castleton used in publisher advertisements and on the wrapper of the 1853 book by that name. A compassionate portrayal of a woman with an infant accompanied that tale of a seamstress who was married and widowed the same day. In the face of her husband's tragic death, the protagonist cradled the child within the flowing fabric of her voluminous dress, evincing gentle pride rather than shame at her child's fatherless fate.[99] Sentimentalizing the plight of a working woman, the novel touched on the powerlessness of women who lacked a male protector. That theme reemerged in other books of the same decade, with *Flora Montgomery, the Factory Girl* and *The Mysteries of Bond Street* both exposing the wiles of men in positions of power who seduced women of honest occupations, forcing

[98] George Thompson, *The Locket: A Romance of New York* (New York: P.F. Harris, 1855), held at AAS and LOC. Associated with Ashbee-listed books.
[99] George Thompson, *Kate Castleton, the Beautiful Milliner; or, The Wife and Widow of a Day* (New York: George W. Hill, 1853), held at the Huntington.

them to choose between disgrace and self destruction.[100] Likewise, the illustration on the cover of *Kate Castleton* appeared the next year on the wrapper of a German translation of that novel under the name of G. Holbrook, another publisher.[101]

Avery's reputation was strong enough to have signed a portrait of Thomas Carlyle printed in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in November 1850, but he apparently turned elsewhere for employment in the following years.[102] In addition to his portrait in *Kate Castleton*, Avery's engraving appeared in at least one book associated with Holbrook in 1855. He signed one of two illustrations stacked on a single page of *The Double Suicide.* The engraving depicts a woman identified as "Maria Waiting For Her Lover" in profile, leaning on a wrought iron railing. Looking dreamily from her balcony into the sky, she passes time until her paramour returns. The print's uneven ink coverage suggests ink clogging typical of stereotyped illustrations.[103]

Placed among other engravings of assorted styles to fill a single book, the stereotype had become a graphic resource to be integrated at will into publications or with other art, as needed by the publisher. Artists and engravers, like authors, received one-time payments from publishers for most of their work, separating the work of creating a printable image from subsequent uses of an engraving. Publishers stereotyped

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[100] Sparks, *Flora Montgomerie, the Factory Girl: A Tale of Lowell Factories. Being a Recital of the Adventures of a Libidinous Millionaire Whose Wealth Was Used as a Means of Triumphing over Virtue* (New York: George Akarman, 1856), held at American Textile History Museum; and George Thompson, *The Mysteries of Bond Street; or, The Seraglios of Upper Tendom* (New York: s.n., 1857), held at AAS.
[101] Georg Thompson, *Käthchen Castleton, Die schöne Putzmacherin, oder die Frau und Bittwe eines Tages* (New York: G. Holbrook, 1854), held at LOC. The translation was first published as *Merkwürdige Geschichte von Käthchen Castleton, die schöne Putzmacherin, oder, die Schicksale eines jungen Mädchens im niederen Lebensstande, die an einem Tage zugleich Frau und Witwe wurde* (New York: Holbrook, 1853), according to Reynolds and Gladman.
[102] "Thomas Carlyle," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 1 (November 1850): 586. A search of the magazine through the 1850s turned up no further illustrations signed by a sculptor named Avery.
[103] George Thompson, *The Double Suicide; or, The True History of the Lives of the Twin Sisters, Sarah and Maria Williams* (New-York: G.C. Holbrook, 1855), held at LOC and UVA.

their holdings, increasing the flexibility with which the property could be employed and the lifespan of a design.

The wood engraver most frequently associated with books in this study was F.E. (Fernando E.) Worcester. He produced hundreds of engravings for children's books, religious literature, almanacs, and periodicals such as *Harper's Weekly* after moving to New York from Boston in the early 1850s. The engravings he prepared for racy publications date from 1849 to 1851, when he operated in Boston as a sole proprietor and then in partnership with William J. Pierce.[104]

Worcester specialized in scenes of low life and social transgression. He signed several illustrations for semi-erotic books that were associated through publisher lists and imprints with George Thompson's work for William Berry. Worcester carved his name into an elaborate engraving that originally served as a cover for *City Crimes* issued as a book but that became a publisher advertisement for that work when bound in with *Jack Harold*, another Thompson novel (fig. 6.10).[105] The advertisement, which appeared at the end of *Jack Harold*, included four different scenes in the background for the book's title and publishing information, obliquely reminding readers that the book at hand embraced all four parts of the original serialization. Placing his name at the lower right within the shadow cast by a clergyman in a graveyard, Worcester incorporated into the engraving many of the styles he executed in unsigned blocks for publishers.

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[104] For short biographical entries about Worcester, see Groce and Wallace, eds., *The New-York Historical Society Dictionary*, 509.

[105] George Thompson, *Jack Harold, or the Criminal's Career* (Boston: W. Berry, 1850), held at AAS, the Huntington, and LOC. Courtesy, Library of Congress. George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *City Crimes; or Life in New York and Boston* (Boston: W. Berry, 1849). The cover, identified as the title page, is cited in Thompson, *Venus in Boston,* eds. Reynolds and Gladman, 106.

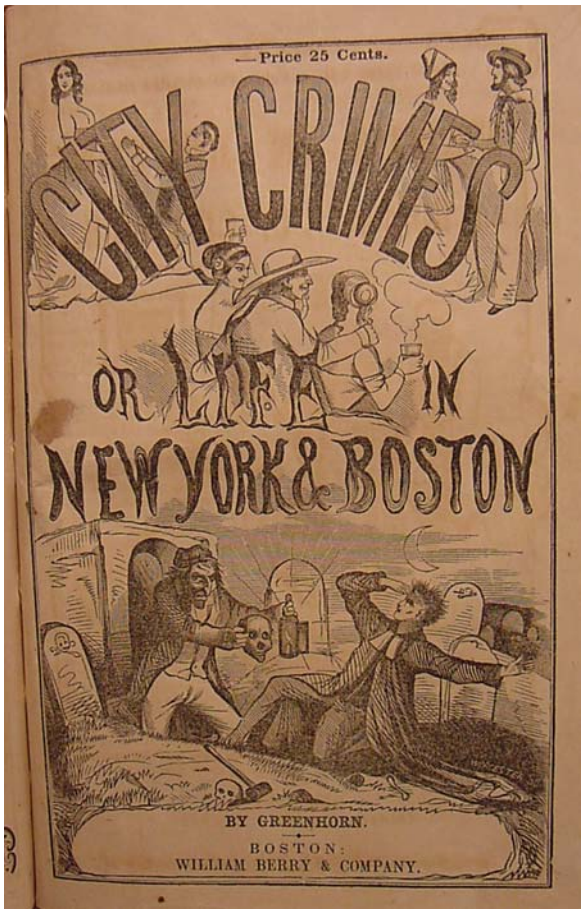

Fig. 6.10. Publisher Advertisement for *City Crimes* (185-)

He engraved buxomy women and earnest men with little shading, emphasizing their simplicity. White-line engraving highlighted villainous, hook-nosed men and scenes of magic. Sly-eyed courtesans wore fashions from the late 1840s and early 1850s; scenes of terror made men's hair spike upward expressively. Many of Worcester's characters, and especially those favored in the story line of *Jack Harold*, were portrayed with heads somewhat smaller than their bodies suggested.

In one novel inspired by the crime sprees of English burglar William Darlington, he provided a portrait of the gentleman-turned-criminal. Worcester's name, affixing in clear view, appeared in issues of *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* issued by two publishers

in 1851 and in the 1860s. In other illustrations for the earlier publication of that popular fictionalized biography, he engraved his signature slyly in shaded areas and carved it in unexpected directions, placing it under a prison cell bunk and scrolling up the narrow side of an open door.[106]

Worcester acknowledged his involvement in racy publications carefully, shying away from linking his name publicly with novels that might damage his ability to work with noted American authors such as Jacob Abbott.[107] His wood engravings in sensational fiction attributed to Greenhorn or George Thompson expressed details of the "flash" lifestyle, with gentlemen criminals boldly smoking, drinking, and planning exploits. Worcester's work exhibited competence but not the highest level of artistic ability characteristic among those who designed and prepared blocks for American book illustrations.

Most engravings in books listed by Ashbee carried no identifying marks linking them to a draughtsman, however. Discovering the identity of workers is particularly difficult because reference sources for nineteenth-century American engraving favor connections to the world of art, not craft.[108] Although in theory each draughtsman brought a style to the translation of images to a plate, the methods actually were fairly

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[106] George Thompson, *Life and Exploits of "Bristol Bill," the Notorious Burglar; being compiled from His Own Confessions and the Records of Crime in England and America* (Boston: Willis Little & Co., [1851]), held at AAS, the Huntington, LOC, University of Virginia, and Buffalo and Erie County Public Library; and George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *Bristol Bill, Being an Account of the Life & Exploits of This Notorious Burglar* (New York: Frederic A. Brady, [186-]). The book was reissued by M.J. Ivers & Co. of New York in the late 1880s or early 1890s with the same cover illustration.

[107] Ferdinand E. Worcester illustrated *Cousin Lucy at the Sea Shore*, a children's book by Jacob Abbott. In copies dated 1842, 1850, and 1856, his engravings appeared in the first edition and in versions reissued by two different publishers. See Jacob Abbott, *Cousin Lucy at the Sea Shore* (Boston: B.B. Mussey, 1842; Auburn, N.Y.: Derby and Miller, 1850; and New York: Clark, Austin & Smith, 1856.), held at AAS.

[108] For instance, F.E. Worcester is not listed in *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary*; earns small mention in *A Dictionary of American Artists, Sculptors and Engravers*; and can be traced across business partnerships in *The New-York Historical Society Dictionary*. Despite having a fairly close number of entries, *Fielding* (more than 12,000) and *The New-York Historical Society* (fewer than 11,000) offer different reference sources for the technical historian.

formalized. F.E. Worcester very likely performed more work for Thompson's publishers than can be identified. The draughtsman's emphasis on staying true to the artist's intention left little room for the development of personal approaches, with Worcester an exception proving the rule.[109]

Worcester's style provides a signature in *New York Life* even in the absence of his name. The frontispiece of the book depicts drunkenness in a bar, a black man and white woman sleeping together on the floor, and men sizing one another up. As in his other illustrations, angular poses heighten the impression of confidence, action, and slick disregard for authority.[110] The publisher, Charles S. Atwood, inserted the illustration as prelude to a rambling but well-written narrative about scandals and unseemly behavior rampant in the upper levels of New York society. The spirit guide Asmodeus aided the author in seeing through barriers of the physical world to uncover the immorality and hypocrisy of upper-class citizens. Advertised as the product of the witty and expert French writer Paul de Kock, the book likely was written by George Thompson.

Many of the books attributed to de Kock were neither genuine nor translations, but a literary undercurrent did indeed bring foreign erotica to America, supplying content

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[109] A traceable artist's symbol appears on an illustration on the copyright notice for *The Double Suicide*. Formed by overlapping capital H and A letters and placed in the left margin just outside the image, the mark can be traced to Henry Anelay, an English landscape artist who produced numerous drawings for improvement literature and periodicals. Anelay became involved with the successor to *The Mysteries of London*, following Reynolds to a new firm that continued the series as *The Mysteries of the Court of London*. See Radway Jackson, *The Concise Dictionary of Artists' Signatures: Including Monograms and Symbols* (New York: Alpine Fine Arts Collection, 1981), 99; and Simon Houfe, *The Dictionary of 19th Century British Book Illustrators and Caricaturists 1800-1914*, rev. ed. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Antique Collectors' Club, 1996), 205 and 219. A different artist's mark exists on the front cover of George Thompson, *Adolene Wellmont, or the Female Adventurer: being the Confessions of a Girl of Spirit, Who was driven into a most extraordinary and wonderful career by the heartless desertion of her lover. The whole forming a true and thrilling picture of the Mysteries of City Life. Written by Herself* (New-York: George W. Hill, 1853), held at AAS. The figure is a cent sign [¢], with the vertical descender extending well below the C. That symbol appears on illustrations in the penny dreadful issues written by G.W.M. Reynolds.

[110] George Thompson, *New York Life; or, The Mysteries of Upper-Tendom Revealed* (New York: Charles S. Atwood, 1849?), held at AAS.

that even Thompson's outpouring of words could not satisfy. Graphics were among the material borrowed from abroad. Publishers regularly imported texts to supplement the output of domestic writers. They also pirated concepts for reengraving in America.

The Americanization of Images

Images that originated abroad were reconstructed as American, and the long distance between their design and implementation further encouraged anonymity. Good draughtsman nearly became invisible in homage to the source, but small cultural details might be altered to fit an image to its new audience and to the skills of the engraver. Publishers borrowed illustrations from George W.M. Reynolds's serialized fiction for inclusion in George Thompson's city mysteries, which largely were modeled after those of Reynolds. American publishers who brought out editions of the English author's *The Mysteries of London* copied selected illustrations, making minor background changes to reflect American household décor. Stereotypes of those illustrations made their way into the hands of Thompson's publishers for further reprinting.

In one notable example, a man leans toward a woman on a parlor couch. A musical instrument lies in the foreground and a folding screen stands behind the pair. Published within the first series of 1846 to 1848, the illustration made its way into numerous American books. At least two American imprints include the same plate from the printed editions of *The Mysteries of London*, including the image and others in what likely were unauthorized editions.[111]

[111] George W.M. Reynolds, *Life in London* (New York: s.n., 184-); and (New-York: Williams Brothers, 1847). A corrosion mark on one of the stereotyped illustrations in the Williams edition suggests that the undated book was printed first. Both books have completely reset type and only share the illustrations.

In the American version of the image, the engraver removed the folding screen, simplified the wood panels in the background, changed the expressions of the subjects to be more open and less detailed, and incorporated more solid lines into all areas of shading. Each of these modifications tended to give the appearance of production in the United States; they reduced the time spent on copying the engraving while reflecting domestic rather than English ornamentation.

Once Americanized, the scene was plated and traveled to other publications. The engraving was printed on the verso of the copyright title page for *The Gay Girls* that George W. Hill filed in 1853 in the Southern District of New York. When actually published that year, the illustration appeared in the same location but deleted the publisher's name from the copyright notice. The title page imprint noted *The Gay Girls* as a New York work but gave no publisher name.

The title page deposit of another book also contained the print on its verso. That publication was produced by George Holbrook, who filed for copyright for *The Double Suicide* in the Southern District of New York. Likewise, the illustration appeared on the title page verso of *The Double Suicide* when published by G.C. Holbrook in 1855 but without a defaced copyright notice. Holbrook absorbed the plate from Hill along with other materials. In 1853, Hill published *Kate Castleton*, and Holbrook's German edition of the following year contained the same plated illustration of the heroine as Hill's English version. A market for second-hand stereotyped illustrations supported the continued production of semi-erotic books, even when text plates were not exchanged.[112]

[112] *Copyright Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870*, Court of the Southern District of New York (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held at LOC; George Thompson, *The Gay Girls of New York, or Life on Broadway. Being a Mirror of the Fashions, Follies, and Crimes of a Great City* (New York: s.n., 1853), held at UVA; and Thompson, *The Double Suicide* (1853), held at LOC and UVA.

From Reynolds in England to Thompson in America, images slipped between the two countries and among publisher imprints, loosely tying together texts and images. The shuffling of stereotyped illustrations among Thompson's works in particular resulted in little consistency of characterization, and in combinations of narrative and art that remained tenuous even with the addition of typeset captions. Wood engravings following this pattern illustrated about half of more than forty books by Thompson, de Kock, and chiefly pseudonymous writers from the 1840s to the 1890s, with illustrations more common before the Civil War than afterward. In surviving books held by research institutions, all of the wood engravings within text blocks were black and white, whether inserted or printed integrally with the text. With one exception that was hand colored, wood engravings on book wrappers also lack color. Prints that have close connections to private collectors more frequently have retained explicit illustrations. Hand coloring tended to be reserved for artistic lithographic and intaglio prints, especially in the most explicit items located.

Explicit Engravings

A collection of engravings dumped for garbage by the City of New York provides some measure of the risqué print that circulated on the city's streets in 1850. A private collector salvaged five hand-colored engravings maintained as evidence in the prosecution of John Sweeney for selling obscene prints. The prints were associated with erotic books in 1850 by their marketing and physical features, but the precise relationship of this group of prints to books sold at the time cannot yet be determined.

At the time Sweeney was arrested, the illustrations were "enclosed between the sheets of books in his possession," according to the arresting officer's report.[113] It is possible that the sheets referred to are those of unbound books supplied in printed sheets to vendors who would then arrange their binding. Buying wholesale in sheets from a large publisher allowed a seller to insert available illustrations into the final copy, sometimes resulting in the issuance of a single book by separate publishers with different art elements. However, three of the engravings appear to have been removed from bindings, suggesting that they may have been bound at one point into books.

That trio of prints is of one size, but the remaining pair also have dimensions compatible with insertion into books that could be hidden in a coat pocket or the folds of a dress. The prints may have been inserted into finished books offered for sale. Street vendors sometimes displayed illustrations to customers by hiding the prints within books for discrete viewing. Produced as a set, the characters depicted in the engravings have similar features. The hand coloring also remains brilliant for certain hues. The number of colors employed varies across the group but maintains a similar quality. In style, they are similar to prints produced in the mid-1800s in England. They depict heterosexual intercourse, voyeurism, group sex, masturbation, and flagellation, with more than one theme occurring in most prints.

One of the illustrations matches a published copy of a nineteenth-century English print making Hershkowitz's collection an even more unusual find. The New York engraving closely follows an English wood engraving from the 1830s or 1840s in which a

[113] Leo Hershkowitz Box, uncatalogued, AAS Manuscripts. The donor, Leo Hershokowitz, has placed the items on loan to the American Antiquarian Society. Few explicit prints have survived to the present in the holdings of public institutions; they likely have fared better in the hands of private collectors. Each of the three sets of obscene illustrations discussed below has only in the last three decades been acquired by a collecting institution.

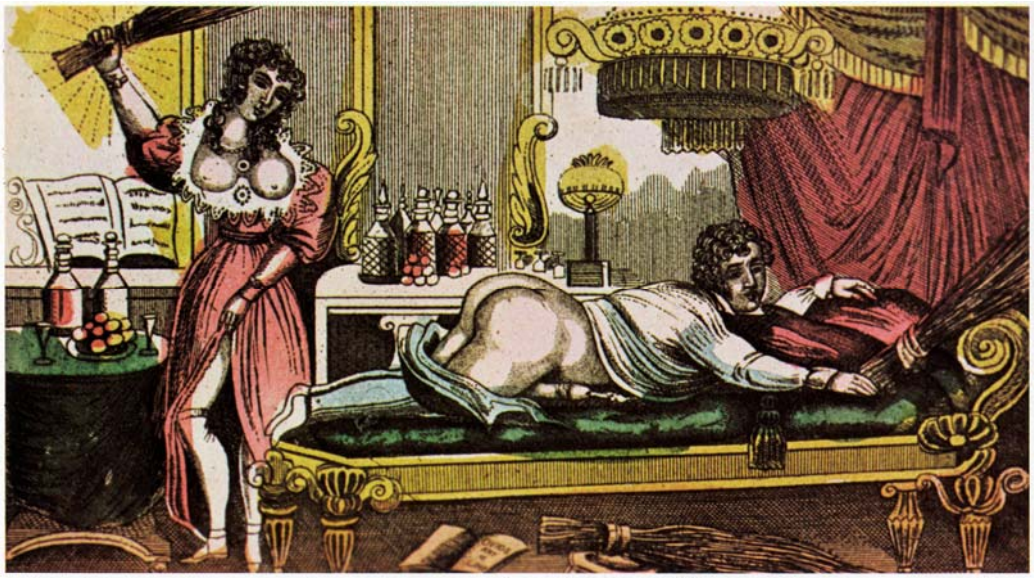

Fig. 6.11. English flagellation scene (183- or 184-])

madam at a fancy hotel applies "birch discipline" to an upper-class male customer (fig. 6.11).[114]

Flagellation erotica offered more allure to English readers than those of other countries, despite the origins of the word "sadism" in the practices of the debauched Marquis de Sade. "The propensity which the English most cherish is undoubtedly Flagellation," wrote Ashbee. "Books innumerable in the English language are devoted to this subject alone; no English bawdy book is free from descriptions of flagellation, and numerous separate plates exist, depicting whipping scenes…." Even prominent authors were known to have written about the practice.[115]

Perhaps the fascination developed in part through the whippings administered to children in school, but the association of carnal pleasure with corporal punishment

[114] Bradley Smith, *Erotic Art of the Masters: The 18th, 19th & 20th Centuries* (New York: The Erotic Art Book Society, [197-]), 20. The Gichner Foundation for Cultural Studies, Washington, D.C., was reported to hold the illustration, but that institution cannot be located and may no longer exist. Smith dates the engraving from the eighteenth century, but the clothing and room interior details suggests otherwise.
[115] Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (1877; reprint, New York: Documentary Books, 1962), xl-xlii, with quotations from xl-xli.

referenced several myths about power relationships and sexuality in English society. It was widely supposed that Catholic convents allowed the supervisors of penitents to dispense the punishment upon young women for small infractions and for lecherous reasons. Upper-crust women desired to participate, and women particularly were stern masters, according to common beliefs. Men might want to lay the lash upon a woman's backside, receive it themselves, or watch such scenes, according to Ashbee.[116]

In the English illustration, a woman with exaggerated breasts revealed by her low-cut bodice lifts a birch faggot, ready to beat the exposed buttocks of an expectant man lying on a settee. Liquor bottles, a chandelier, sheet music, and an ornate mirror in the background emphasize the opulence of the room and class of its occupants. In the foreground, an open book hints at obscene literature. The chief differences of content between the American and the English versions are the identification of the book and the tumescence of the male figure. In the English scene, Ovid's *Art of Love* lies on the floor; in the American illustration, the man's ejaculate remains uncolored. The New York engraving adds brown to the six colors of the original (yellow, green, red, blue, fawn, and pink), with the application of colors varying somewhat from the English version. If the illustrations were pulled from their moorings in books that Sweeney sold, they did so with the higher value of intaglio prints rather than wood engravings. The prints reentered the market for erotica as independent objects likely to have been hidden in a new location: a drawer, a pocket, or another book. A serious collector might add engravings to a book to enhance the pleasure of owning erotica.

[116] Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Centuria Librorum Absconditorum* (1879; reprint, New York: Documentary Books, 1962), 442-470.

One such example can be found in a copy of *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia*. Based loosely on the Girard Cadière affair of 18th-century France, the novel offers a fictional narrative of seduction and destruction flowing from corrupt confessional relationships. Sainfroid destroys the lives of two women, first by seducing a penitent, supplying her with abortifacients to end two pregnancies, and escaping with her to England. Recanting his Catholic faith and moving from France to England only provides more opportunity for Sainfroid to ruin members of the female sex, however. Ever deceptive, he abandons her for an advantageous marriage into the family of a clergyman. During his wife's first pregnancy, he sets a fire to destroy his home and absconds after applying to his wife a poison that eventually causes her death. Ashbee recorded a New York edition of the originally French novel printed in 1854. He noted that the book contained "two very badly done wood cuts, free, but not obscene" and that "the paper and printing are respectable." [117]

At least two copies of that book survive but with different illustrations. Jeremiah H. Farrell of New York placed his imprint on the title page for an undated copy published in the 1850s. Two hand-colored lithographed frontispieces portrayed a pair of artistic seduction scenes in a natural setting. A man on his knees grasped the belly of a woman standing before him in one; the other portrayed the pair lying together, with a satyr creeping up to them. Both male and female figures acquired curvaceous forms, with rounded musculature on the man, and the woman's head matched oddly to her body, being smaller and highlighted by its angle to the viewer. The lithographic techniques emulated copper engraving, with tedious stippling all over. Upon magnification, the stippling is that of irregular lithographic dots rather than the punctures of a dry point tool.

[117] Ashbee, *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, 64-70 (American edition noticed at 70).

Another copy of *The Amours and Sainfroid and Eulalia* exists without lithographs. Henry S.G. Smith's 1854 edition used the same text plates as Farrell's but different inserted illustrations. A frontispiece and seven tipped-in illustrations comprise four pairs of engravings placed sequentially throughout the volume. As noted in *Appendix A*, their materials include pairs of different engraving papers, the unusual straw substrate discussed in chapter four (fig. 4.6), and thin tissue paper laid down onto thicker backing in a chine-collé technique. Penciled captions direct the reader to the phrases serving as the theme for the illustrations, which range from sexual liberties taken upon penitents by nineteenth-century priests to explicit engagements between eighteenth-century upper-class men and women.

The first pair of copper plate engravings subtly depicts seduction in a style similar to that of English prints from about the 1820s. A priest enfolds a woman in his arms for a kiss in one; in the other, a man stealthily lifts the shift of a sleeping woman. Two etchings in a style reminiscent of the early nineteenth century show a man embracing a woman in her dressing room. With her clothing lifted above her buttocks, a woman straddles a man in bed, with her rapturous expression and the point of their sexual union working to attract the eye of viewers.

Another couplet of copper plate engravings that seem to be from the 1830s or 1840s focuses on sexual activity within the sanctuary of a church in a darker, more rustic style. With religious iconography in the background, a man sits in the vestry, his robe pulled up to reveal an oversized penis. At the same time, his arm encircles a young girl kneeling at his side, with his hand pulling up her skirt. That illustration's match (fig. 4.6) finds the same figures in a similar environment, with the clothed man standing to

sexually penetrate the adolescent, who is perched, shockingly, on the edge of a vestry table, as if to symbolize the seduction of a virginal America by the Catholic Church.

The final pairing again changes style, exhibiting a copper engraved bucolic setting with participants wearing the garb of late eighteenth-century styles. In the first, a woman with breasts exposed and dress pulled to her belly wraps her legs around a man. They lay together among trees and sheaves of grain, with sexual penetration barely hidden by their entwined legs. The eighth scene in a boudoir highlights the same moment experienced by a woman in bed and a man wearing only slippers. The book was rebound but, as suggested by the straw paper prints, appear to be roughly contemporary with the text block. They are not, however, original to the book. The text block itself shows three stab holes from the original binding with threads, but none of the pictures has been similarly punctured. These two major discrepancies make it clear that a consumer altered the book after purchase, inserting illustrations that unevenly matched the story line.

Quite a different situation appears in *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin*, which contains the most explicit and skilled of the book illustrations found during research for this dissertation. Locating a nineteenth-century edition of this novel corrects previous dating of this book as a product of the resurgence of American erotica during the Depression era.[118] Ashbee himself did not list *Cicily Martin* among those he had seen, but advertisements from several American sources offered to sell the novel along with a other erotic books and goods during the 1860s. The American Antiquarian Society appears to hold the only surviving nineteenth-century copy. Its end papers match those of

[118] *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin* (New York: Sinclair & Bagley, [1938]); held by author. The title page text is the same as that of the nineteenth-century edition except for the removal of the date, and the spine of the latter version reads "Advantures of Ciely Martin." See also *The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin* (New York: Sinclair & Bagley, 1846), held at AAS.

the rebound copy of *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* (1854). Both books were purchased from the one rare book dealer on the same date, and they most likely derive from the same private collection. *Cicily Martin* offers a distinction, however. Its illustrations are original to the text.

Cicily Martin contains a frontispiece engraving (fig. 6.12) and four prints tipped in between gatherings. Three of those five illustrations are copper engravings, but two reveal in their background the delicate, evenly spaced ruling characteristic of steel engraving. Two of the copper and one of the steel engravings also contain stippling, giving more complex shading to the prints. All five of the engravings have very similar image areas, and the four plates placed within the text contain strikingly consistent renderings of the main characters. The engravings feature costumery that reflects American *haute couture* of the 1840s. Likewise, the text refers to the New York environs of the period, incorporating descriptions of theatrical events and scandals that made the pages of erotica periodicals of the mid-1840s.[119]

Each of the illustrations, and especially the frontispiece, dramatically depicts sexual escapades among the fashionable set. In the frontispiece, wallpaper, books chosen for display, and partially draped windows indicate the setting to be a study overlooking a city skyline. In the foreground, a shapely woman with a revealing décolletage and dress raised above her hips stands pertly astride a man reclining, his trousers lowered to his thighs. The man's hand rests on his partner's knee, bent to facilitate their sexual union as well as to draw the reader's eye to the penetrative act that connects them.

All of the book's illustrations contain three-hole stab marks from the original binding that exactly match those of the text block. The illustrations may have been

[119] Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

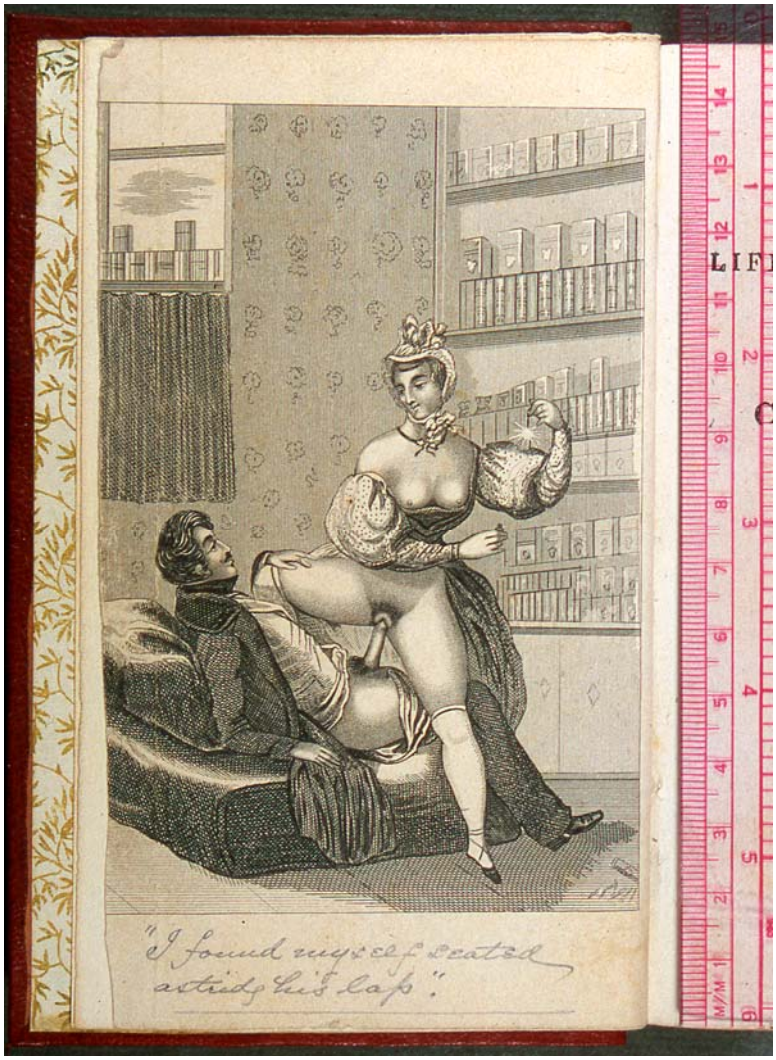

Fig. 6.12. *Cicily Martin* (1846 [185- or 186-]?)

moved from their original binding locations. Lightly written page numbers on the back of several of the pictures probably aided the binder in keeping prints in their proper places, but the engravings were those issued by the publisher. Penciled captions added underneath the illustrations make clear textual references for each.[120]

[120] The AAS copies of *Cicily Martin* (1846) and *Sainfroid and Eulalia* (1854) each bear penciled captions in this manner, written in a similar hand. It seems more likely that the owner of both books added the captions to each novel than that the books were issued with the writing already performed.

The false imprint ascribes responsibility to Sinclair and Bagley of New York, an apparently fictitious publisher absent from city directories of that decade. Comments throughout the narrative refer to New York life in the 1840s, following the heroine's fast life among well-wheeled gentlemen drawn into paying for lavish dinners and living quarters to facilitate their amorous adventures. At last, she settles down to domestic bliss with her true love, closing the novel with a return to modesty that follows the genre's usual conclusion. Despite the imprint date and the author's sophisticated use of a historical setting, the printing can be dated may have been in the 1850s.[121]

Three circulars from that period offer variant titles of *Cicily Martin* among other erotic literature that could be ordered by mail from vendors. John O'Shea of Boston penned his name to one of the advertisements. Another circular promised that an enclosed card (now missing) would indicate the address of the vendor. Both advertisements offered peripheral goods, such as French transparent cards, racy prints, or tobacco boxes with secret compartments, and condoms also accompanied the lifestyle of consumers of obscene books. A third circular promised books but none of the sideline items. Using a layout that – like John O'Shea's – allowed room for handwritten discounts in the right margin, the last vendor penned in markdowns from the established prices. Although the texts and the exact prices varied among the three circulars, the lists of books and the numbers of engravings included in volumes differed little. *Cicily Martin* cost about $1.[122]

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[121] *New York City Directories* published under the following names were surveyed from 1845-1846 to 1889-1890: *The Citizens Directory and Strangers Guide Through the City of New York, The New York City and Copartnership Directory, Doggett's New York City Directory, Rode's New York City Directory*, and *Trow's New York City Directory*. This group subsequently is referred to as *New York City Directories*.

[122] "Catalogue of fancy books," [Boston, 1859 or 1860], John O'Shea, BDSDS 1859; "Private circular, for gentlemen only. No. 2," [New York, 186-] and "Private circular, for gentlemen only. No. 3," [New York, 186-], both from BDSDS 186-, AAS; and "Genuine fancy books. Beautifully illustrated with colored plates," [New York, 186-], BDSDS 186-, AAS. Circulars No. 2 and No. 3 are actually three circulars from a single publisher, with No. 2 the verso of an untitled advertisement that should be considered [No. 1].

The price of another flagellation title, *The Romance of Chastisement*, is not clear, but it probably was sold to an exclusive clientele. Printed in England and offered on toned paper, the book featured a lithographed frontispiece from a ca. 1830 book, *The Exhibition of Female Flagellants*. Ashbee described the image as "a very pretty girl wielding a birth" above her head, and the frontispiece copies that design, only omitting the name of the illustrator, Opie. In an edition dated 1876 on the title page and given the false imprint of "Boston: Tremont Publishing Company," a woman in an ankle-length dress raises a birch bundle above her head, the purple ink of the frontispiece contrasting with the red double-rule border on that and every other page. In the redrawn art, the artist's name has been eliminated.[123]

Every border in the book bears identical flaws on the corner points, making it clear that they are duplicates of a single original. Printed as an octavo format, the sheets would have required eight stereotyped borders for the frames to have been printed as letterpress. The very slim possibility of intaglio cannot be entertained, as the book lacks plate marks or raised ink. Instead, a lithographer drew the border upon a mother stone, which was then inked and pressed against a larger one eight times to form an octavo imposition. A lithographer printed both the text sheets with red frames and the frontispiece. Text was then added by a letterpress printer inside of the frames and the illustration and text block bound together.

In the 1870s, American lithographers were capable of reproducing the colored frontispiece, although a purple illustration would have been quite unusual. Michael R. Goss has traced this imprint as actually being an 1888 London production of Edward

[123] [St. George Henry Stock, pseud.], *The Romance of Chastisement* (Boston [London]: Tremont Publishing Co. [Avery], 1876 [1888]), held at AAS. Ashbee, *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, 345 and 244.

Avery, who published numerous flagellation works from those of Hotten's publishing list after the death of the latter in 1873.[124] Avery shrewdly threw off attention from his own venture by attributing the book to the erotica publishers active across the Atlantic, referring his audience to the clandestine publishing of Boston and a firm whose name played on a major thoroughfare associated with that city's active publishing area.

By the mid-1870s, the increase in federal scrutiny of American publishers using the mail to market erotic books dampened the trade considerably. Only about one-third of the approximately 160 books listed by Ashbee or related closely to his determinations about what comprised American erotica appear still to exist. Those with illustrations have survived at even lower rates, strongly suggesting that pictures intensified the meanings of texts. Books that show evidence of an illustration's removable further attest to the desirability of pictures and their significance apart from their relationship to texts. Perhaps as importantly, books published after the early 1870s appear to have offered fewer pictorial components than those of years preceding prosecutions.

A Life Independent from Text

The illustrations distributed within "fancy" books and their relationship to textual components illuminate the technological levels of publishers in the field, showing to what extent Americans copied designs and practices from foreign sources. From the era of the manuscript to the modern period, illustration practices influenced techniques and styles for text, producing innovations in printing.[125] Woodcuts and engraving on metal, two

[124] Michael R. Goss, introduction to *An Expert, The Romance of Chastisement or, Revelations of School and Bedroom* (1876 [1888]; London: Delectus Books, 1993), i.
[125] Warren Chappell, *A Short History of the Printed Word* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), viii-ix., 177, and 182-183.

techniques seen in *Aristotle's Master-Piece* and *A Sentimental Journey*, framed the range of printed word technologies through the 1790s in America. The processes of lithography and wood engraving that emerged during roughly the same period changed the face of key areas of the publishing industry as the next century unfolded.

The methods and skills that brought pictorial matter to readers of *Aristotle's Master-Piece* and *A Sentimental Journey* were a starting point rather than the limits for reproducing portraiture and vignettes, socially transgressive pictures, sensual art, and sexually explicit illustrations. The bond between pictorial content and text was complex. Pictures accompanying books enriched the text, illustrating, expanding, and superceding an author's intention. The transition of an idea to image to book illustration transformed cultural concepts into physical forms. Illustrations modeled ways for readers to visualize a narrative, and they elaborated on an author's meaning, extending the reach of words. Illustrations also conveyed complete narratives within themselves. They associated novels, especially, with the overwhelmingly visual aspects of urban street life, from giant theatre posters covering buildings to pocket-sized books that middle-class women and men tucked discretely into their outer garments while moving among others.

The continually increasing consumption of visual culture from 1840 to 1890 took place at the same time that an astounding array of technical developments affected the printing industry. The "new pictorialism" of the nineteenth century made unfamiliar topics more clear and increasingly supplied new meanings to fictional works. The use of images became less linked to traditional sources of authority, such as church and government, and more often coupled with advertising and commerce. Illustrations in

books assisted readers to make that transition from public sphere to private meanings for themselves.[126]

Produced apart from text, frontispieces and tipped-in pictures existed separately from and within books at the same time. They might be offered in black and white or in color. Some publishers copied images from foreign works, with local artists and draughtsmen redrawing the pictorials for reengraving. Lithographed, intaglio, and stereotyped illustrations could be shuffled into books unrelated to those in which they first appeared. Letterpress wood engravings or woodcuts printed alongside text sometimes were added, deleted, or exchanged across the life of a single publication, with exchanges among publishers and between titles made possible by stereotyping.[127]

From woodcuts to photography, pictures took on a stunning array of shapes that easily surpassed the range of any previous century. The variety of ways in which illustrations were related to letterpress text has presented a dilemma for bibliographers, who generally focus on text rather than iconography.[128] As bibliographical scholar G.

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[126] Neil Harris, "Pictorial Perils: The Rise of American Illustration," in *The American Illustrated Book in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Gerald W.R. Ward (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1987), esp. 6-7and 14. Printed proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual North American Print Conference, held April 8-9, 1982, Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

[127] Printing refers to the one-time production of a book, from plates, type, or other masters. Two or more states denote stoppage of the press during a single printing to make small corrections to text or images. Separate issues of the same book can occur when a book's title page but no other fundamental alterations occur between publications, or when illustrations are significantly deleted, substituted, or added to the text. As used by bibliographers, the word edition refers only to the printing of a book from reset type, either completely or of such major alteration to justify considering the book to be newly produced. It is important to note that many nineteenth-century publishers promoted very high numbers of "editions" or best-selling publications. In fact, the books rarely were reset in America. They generally were reprinted from stereotyped plates. For more information about bibliographical terms, see G. Thomas Tanselle, "The Bibliographical Concepts of Issue and State," in *PBSA* 69, no. 1 (1975): 17-66.

[128] An example can easily be drawn from the research at hand. The most comprehensive project for preserving American literature during the nineteenth century has been the microfilming of the three volumes comprising Lyle H. Wright's *American Fiction* series. Unfortunately for researchers, frontispieces and other inserted illustrations were rarely filmed, due to the fact that they were not considered integral to the book being filmed. Additionally, textual content similarities and differences reveal only rough physical details about the book. The emphasis on text in bibliographical studies until the last twenty years has made it difficult to integrate the field's methodology with other academic disciplines.

Thomas Tanselle notes, "[I]nserted plates, if their content is visual rather than verbal, represent not merely a different medium of reproduction from the text but a different medium of expression as well. They also often have a life independent of the text they are combined with in a particular edition."[129]

Tying specific technical processes to the multifaceted content of indecent images in the market for erotic print shows some of the interactions among technology, anticipated consumer demand, and culture. American publishers of indecent books integrated illustrations into their publications in ways consistent with the technological practices of their trade. Specifying just what a "typical" semi-erotic or obscene illustration looked like is not possible. Surviving examples suggest a descriptive typology for graphic content to aid in the study of technical practices, however. Correlating the styles and techniques of illustrations to specific books can help trace how publishers employed their material and financial resources to coordinate production and marketing of indecent books.

Publishers applied their ingenuity in a number of ways to the production and marketing of illicit literature. If they rarely used the most labor or capital intensive processes, they certainly didn't depart from the ways that mainstream publishers produced illustrations through most of the century. Those illustrations can be ascribed to artists of low to relatively high talent, although only rarely to a specific person. Original American designs were significantly less refined than those taken from foreign sources, as was the execution of those drawings, and they incorporated an energy of action instead of an intimacy of setting.

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[129] G. Thomas Tanselle, "The Description of Non-Letterpress Material in Books," *SB* 35 (1982): 1-42, quote from 2.

Publishers mass produced images, marketing some individually, others as series, and sometimes breaking up groups for independent sales. Others might be bound together as an album with little accompanying text. Illustrations could be reproduced together on a single sheet with and folded into the pages of a book through letterpress but only with difficulty using other processes. Reproduced apart from the text through intaglio or lithographic printing, images were tipped in, or inserted, into a book between gatherings or at precise locations. They also appeared before the title page as frontispieces. Purchasing the same title from different publishers didn't ensure that the same – or even any – pictures would be acquired. A small number of identical illustrations appeared across several publications and publishers.

Illustrations and books traversed one another on numerous levels, regardless of whether they were directly juxtaposed in a specific book. The processes used for printing determined the opportunities for physical juxtaposing images and text. Coordinating production, advertising in ways that encouraged sales, and engaging in practices that generated initial and repeat sales, either directly or through agents, all shaped how a publisher used available technologies. More importantly, a publisher's connections to the trade and standing resources in stereotyped matter influenced the selection of those technical practices.

The technologies used to produce print culture are a vital link in understanding how Americans balanced conflicting social identities in nineteenth-century America. Abundant opportunities for personal advancement often isolated individuals from their communities of origin and forced engagement with new values, institutions, and environments. Consuming erotica represented one way of mediating the unruly tensions

of Victorian society. Much like Georg Simmel's analysis of the role of fashion in society at the beginning of the twentieth century, print culture allowed Americans to individuate themselves while associating with new social strata.[130]

Technologies and production networks for semi-erotic and obscene print supported and extended other practices of erotica. Print consumption was interwoven with a lifestyle promoted by advertisements for books, prints, and sexual aids signifying participation in the fast life or underground "flash" society.[131] Perhaps more intensely than in other areas of book publishing, illustration practices embodied the complexity of business relationships among vendors of illicit books. The recurrence and deletion of illustrations offer clues to bartering in the trade for plates, printed sheets, and illustrations.

Secondarily, those exchanges affected the relationship of visual and verbal components, encouraging an independence of content among book elements throughout the century. Rather than a growing confluence of the activities and practitioners coordinated by the publisher, producers of socially objectionable illustrations seem to have worked at greater distance from text. A relative separation of production exacerbated inconsistencies of content between graphics and text. Publishers perceived pictures as desirable marketing tools in themselves. The specialization of publication production could only have added to the ability of a publisher such as William Berry to recruit freelance labor or after-hours work from any sector of the trade.

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[130] Georg Simmel, "Fashion," in *American Journal of Sociology* 62 (1957): 541-558. Originally published in *International Quarterly* 10 (1904): 294-295.

[131] As used in Thompson's texts and related publications of the mid-nineteenth century, "flash" pertained to a fashionable lifestyle that flouted authority, ranging from thievery and gambling to prostitution and sporting men. See Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner, comps., *Dictionary of American Slang* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1960), 188. Historians Patricia Cline Cohen, Timothy Gilfoyle, and Helen Horowitz are in the midst of a major research project exploring antebellum flash society.

Chapter Seven

Mechanical Fingerprints

> Visitors who watch the motions of the press while it is performing its work are always particularly pleased with the life-like actions of the iron fingers that come up and take hold of the lower edge of the sheet of paper on the [feeding] apron, and, after lifting it gently over the *ledge* formed on the lower side of the apron to prevent its sliding down, draw it in under the platen to be printed….
>
> — Jacob Abbott (1855)[1]

William Berry took part in building and supplying a national market for risqué literature. From the late 1840s to the start of the Civil War, he published in Boston and provided by mail from New York, a variety of semi-erotic books and periodicals. Berry's sensational fiction, sporting life newspapers, and spiritualism publications were for many readers an entryway into an increasingly eroticized lifestyle. Certain of his practices revealed the nature of his operations to the public, but for the most part, he did business in murkier circumstances. Berry left no ledger books, but production marks on his publications provide a type of "mechanical fingerprint" that links his production network to the most popular American book printing press of the era. [2]

The slight indentations left by the Adams power press gripper mechanism, shown on a copy of *The Countess* (fig. 7.1), reveal information that publisher records have not

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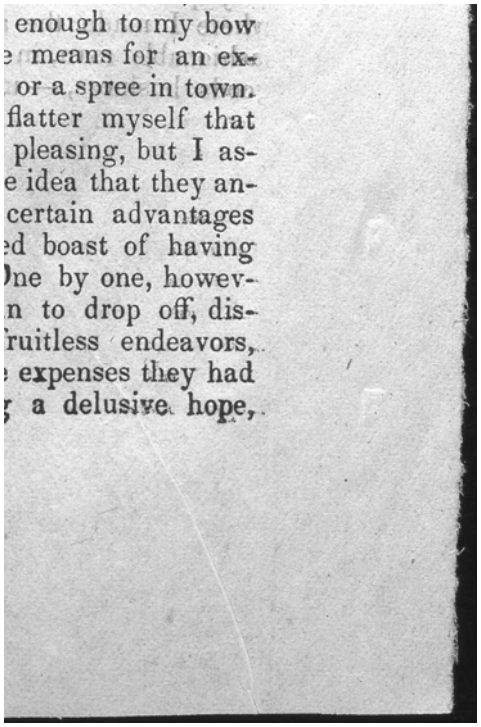
[1] Jacob Abbott, *The Harper Establishment: How Books are Made* (1855; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001), 121-122. Italics in original.

[2] I am indebted to Richard Noble, senior librarian cataloguer at the Brown University Rare Book Room, for suggesting the phrase "mechanical fingerprints." An earlier, and shorter, version of this chapter was presented at New Scholarship in Book History and Print Culture: An Interdisciplinary Conference, sponsored by the Book History and Print Culture Program of the University of Toronto, the Toronto Centre for the Book, and Massey College, on October 11, 2002, and subsequently was published as "Mechanical Fingerprints and the Technology of Nineteenth-Century American Erotica," *The University of Toronto Quarterly* 73 (Fall 2004): 1036-1050. Much of the research for this chapter was conducted while holding the Reese Fellowship for the Study of Bibliography in the Americas at the American Antiquarian Society, August 2002, with additional training provided July 2002 during a Reese Fellowship at Rare Book School/Book Arts Press, University of Virginia.


enough to my bow
means for an ex-
or a spree in town.
flatter myself that
pleasing, but I as-
e idea that they an-
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n to drop off, dis-
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expenses they had
a delusive hope,

Fig. 7.1. Adams power press gripper marks (indentations)

survived to report.[3] As production details, they can be used to estimate the capitalization, general skill levels of workers and the profits involved in the publishing of indecent books. That analysis adds significantly to the amount of data available for studying little-known publishers. The presence of these marks suggests that historians must study the gendered labor patterns of individual firms, rather than accepting without question the shop practices recorded by equipment manufacturers and major publishers. Studying the production details of *Life in Boston* and *The Countess* can expand our understanding of how content, technological development, and gendered occupational patterns intersected in nineteenth-century American publishing. As illuminated in Judith McGaw's study of

[3] George Thompson [The Author, pseud.], *The Countess: or Memoirs of Women of Leisure; Being a Series of Intrigues with the Bloods, and a Faithful Delineation of the Private Frailties of Our First Men* (Boston: W. Berry & Co., [1851 of 1852]); held by AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

the role of women in the manufacture of paper, gendered labor structures influenced the development of nineteenth-century American printing presses. Social factors shaped the profit margins of publishers and the structure of work in the printing industry.[4]

The Adams power press represented a set of labor practices asserted by equipment manufacturers and the publishing firms considered technological leaders in their industry. Through machine design, promotional iconography, and contemporary accounts, that press can be coupled to a change in the industry's gendered division of labor. As machine tenders for the automated Adams press, women gained entry into pressrooms. The growing prominence of the press stimulated union struggles over the admission of women to the trade in non-bindery positions. Descriptions linking women's work to the Adams power press raise the question of whether publishers of indecent books followed the labor patterns asserted for that press or restricted their operations to less profitable male labor. Technical details, including imposition patterns, gripper marks, and point holes, can be analyzed to provide more data about the tacit knowledge and skill required for operating the Adams press. These bits of information and the close work-living arrangements of male printers in Boston may help to clarify the relationship of work patterns to the production of illicit literature by William Berry.

Even in the absence of business records, indentations found on the edge of press sheets signal that a printer employed an Adams power press for producing that book. Printers relied heavily on Adams presses for book production from the 1840s to the 1870s, and to a lesser extent after about 1880. This chapter presents an overview of the systems involved in letterpress printing, a selective history of the developmental path of

[4] Judith A. McGaw, *Most Wonderful Machine: Mechanization and Social Change in Berkshire Paper Making, 1801-1885* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

American printing press technologies, and a summary of the significant niche that the Adams power press served through the 1870s. Examples drawn from publications such as *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* and certain Bibles provide further context for identifying marks made by the Adams power press. A method for researching elusive publishers can be outlined through a detailed examination of a sporting newspaper and semi-erotic book published by William Berry.

Berry was a key provider of racy books whose publishing list became absorbed by publishers of more explicit works in a national market for erotic literature. The ways in which his publications made their way into New York publishing circles offer details about his business operations, as well as those of major New York erotica entrepreneurs targeted by moral reformers. Berry can be situated within a competitive, yet tightly interconnected, market for print erotica located by the mid-1850s in New York. The final chapters of this dissertation look closely at the technological practices associated with Berry, examine his role within American erotica publishing networks based primarily in New York, and conclude by summarizing trends among those entrepreneurs.

The Press and Its Two Systems

In its simplest form, a printing press requires two systems: one to transfer an image from an original, and one that encompasses all operations and materials for cleanly printing that image.[5] In letterpress printing, a heavy platen, paper, and inked originals

[5] Philip Gaskell cites two collections of moving components in the common press: the impression assembly and the carriage assembly. By using the term *system* and broadening the description of printing past the product of the wooden hand press, other methods of printing, from intaglio and lithography to screenprinting and photography, are included. See Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (1972; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1995), 118.

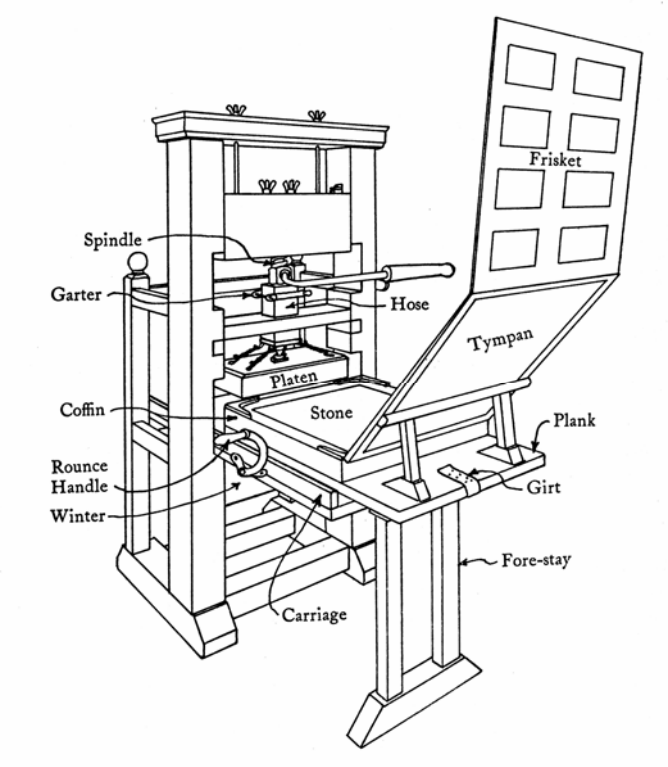

Fig. 7.2. Common press (ca. 1800)

meet, with pressure as the transfer process. Letterpress printing generates a duplicate from type or other originals that have been created by shaving away non-reproducing portions to leave raised, print-ready areas. After inking the higher areas, a printer places a sheet of paper on top of the original. With firm pressure applied to bring together the sheet, ink, and original, a reverse image can be produced on the paper.

In the wooden common press (fig. 7.2) that was popular before 1800 in America, massive timbers comprised a frame for the impression system of the common press.[6] A metal screw mechanism lowered a heavy, flat weight called the *platen*, forcing it downward to press the paper against a type form. The *head* and *winter* served as upper and lower horizontal braces for a pair of vertical frame timbers called the *cheeks*.

[6] Plate A, Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Colonial Printer*, 2nd rev. ed. (1938; reprint, New York: Dover, 1994). The illustration was drawn by Ralph Green.

Additional members squared off the frame and provided lateral support to keep the frame upright. A nut and screw attached to the underside of the head, with the screw unit extending downward. The pulling bar attached to a *spindle*. A box-like casing (the *hose*) housed the screw as it passed through a further horizontal brace (the *till*), moving up and down with the screw but preventing sideways movement. With the hose attached to a platen, pulling the bar lowered the screw, pressing against and lowering the platen. The platen pressed against paper, the *form* of type to be printed, and the *stone* underneath, all braced in the *coffin* (later called the press bed). The common press required two pulls to make a full impression, with a pressman shifting the form by halves under the platen.[7]

The second press system has received much less attention from printing historians, yet feeding and delivery became all the more critical with increased press speeds and sophisticated mechanization. Joined by a hinge on the common press, a *frisket* and *tympan* held paper in place while allowing the form to make contact with areas intended for printing. A *rounce* (handle) turned a windlass lashed to the stone under the form, pulling both into the coffin and under the platen, ready for an impression.

Two pressmen together worked a single press, with the senior, or first, choosing whether to print the initial quire or to perform inking. The junior man, or second, usually took the beginning shift for inking the form with ink balls and checking the sheets that had just been worked off, or printed.[8] The first then placed a sheet of paper on the

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[7] Thomas C. Hansard, *Typographia: An Historical Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the Art of Printing…*, edited by D.F. Foxon (1825; reprint, London: Gregg Press Ltd., 1966), 548-594, 596-600. Gaskell, *New Introduction to Bibliography* and Wroth, *Colonial Printer* also discuss press operations.

[8] Although both members of the pair took turns at these tasks, the junior printer always began the day by "knocking up the balls." Taking a sheepskin soaked in urine to enhance its pliability, the printer rinsed and then squeezed the leather to remove liquid, then tacked it around a ball of wool placed in a cupped portion of a wooden handle. Slightly moist paper trapped ink better, making a better impression. For the best historical overview of this process, see the first manual of trades in English, Joseph Moxon's *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing,* Herbert Davis and Harry Carter, eds., with revisions and

tympan, allowing the paper to be pierced by non-moving *pins* affixed to the tympan and marking the center of the sheet. He cut out holes from the frisket to mirror the areas of the form that were to print, then folded down frisket onto tympan, and the pair onto the form. He turned the rounce, shifting the carriage that held this press bed into position under the platen, and pulled the bar to make an impression of one-half of the form of type. Shifting the carriage again, he pulled another impression for the second half, completing one side of the sheet. After working off all the sheets for one side of a job, the pressman continued with a second form. He placed the once-printed sheets onto the tympan using the same pin holes, pulled two impressions, and completed the printing of the second side. In between the printing of each sheet, the second printer applied more ink to the form, as needed.

During the nineteenth century, several specialized assemblies often worked together to ensure feeding, registration, and delivery, separating the operations of the tympan, frisket, and pins into interrelated subsystems. The terms "gripper" or "nipper" are associated with mechanical presses.[9] A gripper is any element, such as a clamp or claw, that holds firmly yet releases automatically a sheet of paper while conveying that sheet through the press. Grippers feeding a bed-and-platen press must press against both top and bottom of a sheet for a sure hold. Grippers feeding a cylinder press need only secure the sheet against the cylinder by pressing from a single side. Therefore, either pairs of mechanical fingers (usually positioned across a bar) or single fingers designed to

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enlargements by John A. Lane to the original of 1683-1684. Reprinted by Mark Batty, West New York, N.J., in 2004. See alsoHansard, *Typographia*, 600-601. Methods of printing on a common press are very similar to those detailed by Richard-Gabriel Rummonds in his comprehensive manual, *Printing on the Iron Handpress* (New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Books, 1998).

[9] David Napier called his invention the "griper," but that spelling has not been incorporated into this chapter. For a summary of three of his patents, see *Printing Patents: Abridgements of Patent Specifications Relating to Printing, 1617-1857* (London: Printing Historical Society), a facsimile reprint of original edition (London: Great Britain Patent Office, 1859), with additional notes by James Harrison.

hold paper against another object can serve as grippers. [10] Because of their function in pulling a sheet through a press, grippers make contact on the leading edge of the paper.

American Printing Press Development

From 1500 to 1800 the design and practice of using a wooden press reached consensus in England and Europe, with Dutch improvements diffusing little outside of that country.[11] Colonial American printing offices featured the common press, a traditional wooden hand press. By using an iron screws, printers doubled the force exerted when a printer gave a press a pull. Unable to machine iron adequately, colonists imported complete presses from England to procure iron screws or carved their own screws from wood. Domestic production and commercial sale of common presses with American-made iron components commenced in 1769, and within a decade press building facilities existed in Connecticut, Philadelphia, and the Carolinas.

Despite the complex labor operations necessary to prepare a form and pull an impression, the machine itself remained simple. Book, newspaper, and jobbing production could all be performed on the same press, in a single printing office. An uncomplicated wooden design with minimal iron components allowed for easy repair by local carpenters, ensuring longevity.[12]

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[10] Grippers may be used to convey a sheet toward the platen, to hold sheets during impression, to pull sheets away from the sticky ink of a form, and to take them away after impression. Various Adams patents claimed all four of these operations. Today's grippers are either narrow closeable plates (much like the Adams' grippers described below), metal extensions used to press against another object, or grippers with "fingers" that clamp onto the sheet. See Victor Strauss, *The Printing Industry* (Washington, D.C.: Printing Industries of America, 1967), esp. 325.

[11] James Moran, *History and Development of Printing Presses from the Fifteenth Century to Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 31.

[12] Wroth, *Colonial Printer*, 83-84.

English mechanics led the way in developing methods for creating better impressions and enlarging presses during the eighteenth century. Inventors experimented with screw design, counterweights, and levers to augment power, reduce labor, and make possible a larger impression area to eliminate two-pull printing. Increasing the pressure made it possible to enlarge the platen area, allowing printers to pull a press bar once for a full-form impression. Yet the added strain eventually damaged the wooden supporting structure. Stanhope's iron press, introduced about 1800, incorporated levers, a single-cast iron frame, and other improvements, opening an era of press innovation.[13] Soon mechanics and manufacturers experimented with upward and vertical pressure, and with cylinders as well as platens.

Iron hand presses provided more powerful impressions, and their completely metal structures withstood the greater pressure exerted by levers, especially in toggle-joint designs. They allowed larger sheets to be printed with less labor, but failed to increase significantly the number of impressions made in a day's work. The relatively slow speed of 200 to 250 impressions an hour presented a challenge to early nineteenth-century English publishers anxious to bring newspapers quickly to market.

Consumer hunger for news helped to drive demand for faster printing presses in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. During the Napoleonic Wars, publishers in England competed fiercely to bring news first to readers. Friedrick König's cylinder press invention in 1811 achieved commercial use by the *Times* of London in 1814, speeding newspaper production and requiring new skills from workers. König's further

[13] Moran, *Printing Presses*, esp. 50-57.

refinements through 1824 created a design that other manufacturers merely fine tuned or structurally reinforced throughout the remainder of the century.[14]

In König's steam cylinder press, a form moved under an impression cylinder. Cylinders reduced the point of impression to about an eighth of an inch in width, thus applying the full force of the press to a much smaller area. In contrast, platen presses required pressure over the entire face of the form. The moment of impression created significant stress on the press, as did release of the platen; in comparison, a cylinder applied continuous pressure. Platen presses reach the limits of their capabilities as the impression area neared 2,000 square inches, at which point the force needed to impress the entire area exceeded design capabilities. Cylinder presses allowed much larger sheets to be printed at a higher speed per square inch.[15]

The speed of new cylinder presses matched the demands of publishers but hastened production at the expense of a clean impression and the damage to type that resulted from cylindrical impressions. Cylinder presses also required a higher level of mechanical skill from operators, while reducing traditional work requirements, such as packing a tympan for even impressions and carefully registering sheets.[16] Despite opposition by pressmen whose jobs were threatened by the machine's speed, the *Times* and its competitors invested in the expensive equipment in order to reduce cost per issue and to gain a competitive advantage by offering news first. With improvements through

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[14] W.W. Pasko, ed., *American Dictionary of Printing and Bookmaking: Containing a History of These Arts in Europe and America, with Definitions of Technical Terms and Biographical Sketches*, intro. by Robert E. Runser (1894; reprint, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1967), 445.
[15] Pasko, *American Dictionary of Printing*, 447.
[16] The elimination of the task of preparing ink balls from printing office labor surely caused no tears. For pressman opposition to cylinder technology and comments about the inability of cylinders to produce high-quality print, see Moran, *Printing Presses*, esp. 113.

the mid-1820s, the press produced 1500 to 2000 impressions an hour, or 800 to 1000 perfected sheets.[17]

On the other side of the Atlantic, Americans still lacked skilled machinists, machine tools, and an expansive newspaper market. Without demand for costly cylinder-printed newspapers, American inventors attempted to multiply the impressions possible from a hand press, but with little success. As long as the pull mechanism linked each impression to horizontal power supplied by a human or animal, progress remained slow.[18]

Daniel Treadwell shifted the development of hand presses by driving them with an external power source. His work began while visiting England to arrange for the fabrication of a treadle press. English experiments with steam power and cylinder designs influenced him profoundly. Unable to sell his treadle press in England because urban printing offices lacked the additional space it required, he returned to America. He abandoned the foot-powered press and began tinkering along the lines of designs he had seen in England.

He soon found that manufacturers in his own country lacked the machine tools for constructing a cylinder machine, a situation compounded by the difficulty of procuring a steam engine suitable for the job. He then turned to designing a bed-and-platen press powered by horses, which he finished in 1821. A moving bed and ink rollers on a carriage increased the speed, and the downward-moving platen produced 500 to 600 impressions per hour. The inventor licensed his design to other users. Treadwell delayed the patent application until 1826 in hopes of extending control over the machine, but he

[17] Hansard, *Typographia*, 694-698.
[18] Numerous iron hand presses were proffered, however, including the fabulously decorated Columbian, which inspired an equally appointed English imitator.

ended up selling his interest in the press just three years later.[19] Other Americans quickly patented variants, claiming steam power or doubling the frisket while maintaining Treadwell's reciprocating bed.[20]

In London, Treadwell had engaged the firm of David Napier to engineer his English-patented treadle press. With growing experience in press fabrication, Napier garnered a contract in 1824 to design a perfecting machine to print both sides of the sheet in one pass. Napier's system of grippers accepted a sheet fed by an operator, clasped the paper to a first cylinder for printing, then let go of the sheet at the moment that grippers on a second cylinder positioned the paper for printing the reverse side. His cylinders raised and lowered to allow the form to move for faster printing. At full tilt, the machine printed 2,000 impressions an hour, or 1,000 perfected sheets.

Like many bed-and-platen presses, initial designs for Napier's perfecting cylinder required human power. Although the automatic inking and operation eliminated pressman once the machine was started, the well-designed "Nay-Peer" cylinder press required two men working cranks to provide motion force (with a third available to spell the team). Later, steam engines became a power source. Neither the inventor nor the printer who commissioned the press applied for a patent, perhaps because of the high cost of patenting inventions in England. Napier instead placed his faith in securing profits in his reputation and the intricacy of the machine's design.[21]

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[19] Ralph Green, "Early American Power Printing Presses," *SB* 4 (1951-1952): 143-153.

[20] American jobbing presses designed to produce small bills or cards became, in the late nineteenth century, an important specialty in the printing trades. Their omission reflects this chapter's focus on bed-and-platen presses. Likewise, presses invented or improved by Booth, Newton, Taylor, Tucker, Tuft and others have not been described in this study, while those of Hoe appear only when compared to designs prepared by the Adams brothers.

[21] At the time, the English patent system required separate applications, fees, and service payments for protection of inventions in Ireland, Scotland, and England. Patenting in all three jurisdictions might cost as much as £350, an 1829 committee investigating patent practices found. Further, the benefits of the system

The first Napier cylinder press in America, imported from England in 1825, served two New York newspapers. Time-sharing allowed each firm to split the cost of the press and to out produce their respective morning and evening competitors, who used bed-and-platens. A single man powered the machine by crank, and two boys or men fed sheets from each side. The press churned out the *New-York American* and the *New-York Daily Advertiser* in record time and reduced labor costs. Instead of allowing the presses to remain idle, the owners sought outside work in order to keep their press running.[22]

Attempting to sell his press in America without the benefit of legal protection created further problems for Napier. Unable to patent his invention in the United States without being, or intending to become, an American citizen, he sold very few of the expensive presses.[23] The few that came to the country caused a great stir among mechanics. Robert Hoe, a prominent press maker, took advantage of every opportunity to examine Napier machines when they needed repairs or when called upon to provide a machine evaluation for assessing customs fees.[24]

Napier's design proved popular in the United States, although Napier himself made little money.[25] Virtually every cylinder press on the American market through 1850 imitated his single-cylinder design, and even larger presses designed later in the century

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were unknown to many inventors even in the 1820s, especially those in less urban areas of the United Kingdom. "As late as 1834, Henry Bessemer, by his own admission, 'knew nothing of patents or patent law', even after three years' residence in London, and consequently sold his unprotected, early inventions for paltry amounts." See Christine MacLeod, *Inventing the Industrial Revolution: The English patent system, 1660-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 76-77 and more generally 75-96.

[22] Rollo G. Silver, "An Early Time-sharing Project: The Introduction of the Napier Press in America," *Journal of the Printing Historical Society,* no. 7 (1972): 29-36.

[23] Jan Vojáček Ing, *A Survey of the Principal National Patent Systems* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936), 115-116. The Patent Act of July 4, 1836, allowed British subjects to apply for patents – for a price. Americans paid a fee of $5; British citizens, $500; and other foreign applicants, $300 (116-119).

[24] Frank Comparato, *Chronicles of Genius and Folly: R. Hoe & Company and the Printing Press as a Service to Democracy* (Culver City, Calif.: Labyrinthos, 1979), 37-43 and 105-106.

[25] Napier's fame as a press manufacturer in England focused on the quality of his platen machines rather than his cylinder presses, despite the prevalence of single-cylinders of the Napier type in nineteenth-century America. Pasko, *American Dictionary of Printing*, 388 and 447.

incorporated his perfecting ideas. The moniker "Napier" became a generic term in equipment advertisements. Even Robert Hoe & Co., which claimed patent rights to the firm's own cylinder presses, acknowledged having created the company's first single-cylinder design after inspecting a Napier import in 1829.[26] The machine that printed the first penny press newspapers of James Gordon Bennett in 1835 was, in fact, a Hoe.[27]

American cylinder press manufacturers found their advantages limited in smaller sizes and instead carried a greater variety of dimensions above the mid-size presses in which platen manufacturers dominated. During the late 1830s and early 1840s, American publishers used the new presses to print mammoth sheet newspapers sold on the street and sent, as supplements, through the mail. Postal officials responded in 1845 with guidelines that limited preferential postal rates for newspapers to mailings originating from manufacturers but not periodical agents. The regulations also separated newspapers of 1,900 square inches or less from those of greater dimensions, placing a surcharge on the larger sheets. Initiated in response to supplement publishing that packaged fiction as newspapers in order to reduce mailing costs, the new rates reinforced the production capabilities of bed-and-platen and cylinder presses, and wrote into law the favored status of mid-size publications and the American presses that tended to print them.[28]

Design borrowing permeated the other major track of press development, that of the platen. More adaptable to the immediate American book and jobbing market than a cylinder, Treadwell's bed-and-platen press attracted competitors among his own countrymen. His hand-powered press introduced a novel configuration in that the form

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[26] Silver, "Time-sharing," 36; Comparato, *Chronicles*, 42.
[27] Comparato, *Chronicles*, 98-99.
[28] United States Post Office Department, *Postage Rates 1789-1930: Abstract of Laws Passed Between 1789 and 1930 Fixing Rates of Postage and According Free Mail Privileges* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1930), 4-5.

shifted upward to impress paper against the platen, which was locked into position, instead of the platen making a downward thrust to meet the form. The complex gearing he installed to feed paper, raise and lower the form, and deliver printed sheets to a pile required constant supervision by workers with advanced mechanical skills. Isaac Adams learned about the operations of a Treadwell press from his work repairing the machine. Carpenters like Adams transferred their woodworking know-how into mechanical mindedness through experiences such as these.

Treadwell's venture suffered a setback when a fire in the mid-1820s consumed his establishment. Delayed by this misfortune from introducing his improved press, he restocked his machine tools, constructed new presses, and finally applied for an additional patent. Other mechanics, however, brought out similar presses during his hiatus. Isaac Adams left employment with the printer-mechanic Daniel Fanshaw and commenced his own career building presses. Incorporating the stationary platen, the Adams wooden power press of 1830 exploited the expanding market for bed-and-platen presses and encroached on Treadwell's popularity. Smaller and more powerful for its size, the Adams press could be operated in an ordinary printing office rather than requiring alterations of workspace.[29]

The Adams Power Press

The Adams design met technical, economic, and social needs in a time of industrial transition. It was backward-looking in its similarity to hand-press techniques, yet forward-looking in its ability to continually and accurately supply paper. The press

[29] Ellen B. Ballou, *The Building of the House: Houghton Mifflin's Formative Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970), 22.

comprised half of a dual invention track for letterpress printing technology throughout much of the nineteenth century in the United States, serving a substantial but defined market for books and jobbing with a design superior to any imitator. It also produced newspapers, adding flexibility to its capabilities.

The unassailable mid-century market position of Adams power presses, and the fall of those machines from use three decades later, suggests a technological trajectory that cannot be explained by a simple focus on the speed and cost of machinery output. Quality and production flexibility were at least equally important to – and perhaps inseparable from – those variables. A manufacturer's ability to make equipment "efficient" depended both on providing low-cost production, and also upon external factors, such as the costs of ancillary labor.

Isaac Adams patented several designs for his power press, starting in1830 with a wooden bed-and-platen press. Turning to cast iron for stability in 1836, he designed the model that formed the basis for later improvements (fig. 7.3).[30] Those features included single-operator feeding and refined automation features. His patents, shrewdly extended and reissued through the 1860s, presented him with a lock hold on system developments crucial to serving the American market for bookwork.[31] The delivery mechanisms

[30] Patent no. 9445X, "Printing Press," Isaac Adams, March 2, 1836 (United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C.). Elevation drawing of the first of two presses improved by Seth and on which Isaac Adams filed for patent protection in 1836. No. 9445X (shown) claimed a gripper mechanism. A second patent, no. 6178X, claimed automated functions enabling a single male or female feeder to work the machine rather than relying on a boy for setting up and stacking sheets for the feeder. These and later improvements comprised the constellation of features known as the Adams power press, which was primarily identified by the unique upward-moving form motion, the machine's accurate registration, and an automatic delivery mechanism for distribution. The patent data that follow are cited from electronic versions of United States Patent and Trademark Office records permanently archived at <www.uspto.gov>.

[31] A fire in the Patent Office destroyed records of the 1830 patent in 1836, but the original patent model is housed in the Graphic Arts Collection of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (Unnumbered Model, 1830; Graphic Arts Catalog 11,024). The single-feeder press, no. 9445X, was patented on March 2, 1836, and reissued as no. RE116 on June 6, 1848. No. 6178X, a single- or double-feeder press, was patented Oct. 4, 1836, and received a seven-year extension. Through legislation (a congressional act of

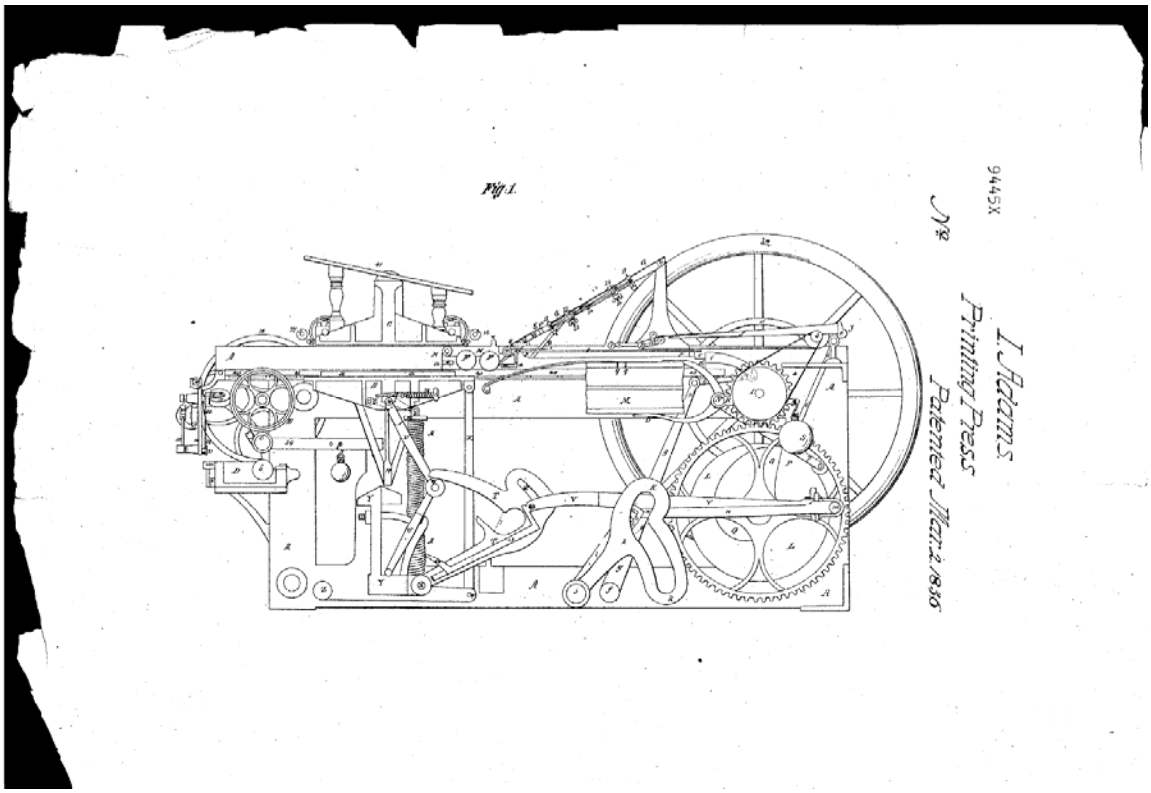

Fig. 7.3. Adams power press (1836)

patented as part of the Adams power press became critical to the technological trajectory of other presses, leading to conflict in the industry about the legality of attempts by manufacturers to incorporate fly and gripper designs into their own presses. The Adams patents shaped the ways that American press makers, and especially Robert Hoe & Company, legally could address significant automation problems.

The bed-and-platen press renewed the relevance of hand-press skills and put a familiar face on mechanization, masking the occupational change that its use supported. For half a century, Adams's bed-and-platen design dominated platen designs for book

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Aug. 16, 1856), the inventor received an additional seven-year extension through March 2, 1864. The patent was reissued as no. RE546 on April 20, 1858. (United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C.) For additional information on the United States Patent Office, see *An Account of the Destruction by Fire of the North and West Halls of the Model Room* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1877); and Kenneth W. Dobyns, *The Patent Office Pony: A History of the Early Patent Office* (Fredericksburg, Va.: Sergeant Kirklands Press, 1994).

production, as Napier's cylinder did in its own field, and its versatility allowed printers to mix the daily work of short jobs with the more extensive press time required for printing books. In capturing the book and jobbing market while remaining highly competitive in the field of mid-size newspapers, the Adams power press provided a long-lived example of how volume production comprised one among many concerns in the printing industry.

Occupying a powerful legal and technical position, Isaac Adams became founder of one of two major enterprises that dominated domestic press production through the 1840s and 1850s. The competing Hoe Company marketed primarily cylinder presses that pushed the speed limits of print production, lowered costs per unit, and ushered in a new industrial era of automation. Cylinder presses required much more mechanical expertise to set up and maintain than other machines. English printers applied cylinder presses to the manufacture of both newspapers and books, but their American counterparts primarily used cylinder presses for penny-press newspapers. American printers, on the other hand, overwhelmingly preferred the Adams power press for book printing. Operating at the speed of 1,000 impressions per hour, it was several times faster than a hand press and about half as fast as a cylinder machine. Strict quality standards and a policy of selling rather than leasing machines helped the manufacturers of Adams equipment to create a faithful clientele.[32]

The Adams design enabled a much more accurate and gentle impression than its competitors. Although cylinder and bed-and-platen presses became closely associated with printing newspapers and books, respectively, in practice, larger printing firms tended to mix jobs. At the same time, the increasing cost of machinery encouraged shop owners

[32] Comparato, *Chronicles*, 19-20.

to narrow their specialties in order to most effectively gain advantages from the strengths of machines in which they had invested.[33]

Stereotyping helped to create a difference between American and English publishers. American publishers tended to stereotype books rather than setting new type for each printing or keeping standing forms. By creating molds of type pages, and from them lighter and more durable stereotype plates, American publishers reduced storage space, conserved valuable printing type, and made portable their investment. Plates allowed publishers to print books in small batches as needed, rather than risking capital for a single large run. Publishers transported and bartered plates across the country as part of copyright exchanges of previously printed works.[34]

Isaac Adams, aided by his brother Seth, met the need of publishers for increased speed without damage to stereotyped plates. The upward-moving form and stationary platen of their design produced a delicate "kiss" impression, significantly reducing the wear upon stereotyped plates or hand cast type that was caused by other equally powerful presses. Improvements in 1836 focused on reconciling automated delivery systems with the machine's capability for quality. The gripper component, which removed paper from the feeding board and positioned the sheet under the tympan for printing, registered both sides of printed sheets. Tapes and fly devices ensured the accurate removal of paper from the press and the stacking of finished sheets.

The design's versatility allowed printers to mix daily jobbing work with book production. Books required an extended production time, occupying the press while being printed and requiring capital investment from the start of typesetting and printing,

[33] Comparato, *Chronicles*, 364.
[34] Michael Winship, "Printing from Plates in the Nineteenth Century United States," *Printing History* 5, no. 2 (1983): 15-26.

through binding, and until eventual sale. Job printing could be alternated with books on press using the Adams power press, allowing a printer to take orders for calling cards, invoices, or broadsides and to be able to supply immediate demand.

This flexibility helped a printer to eke out a living until books in press could be sold. In capturing the book and jobbing market, the Adams power press provided a long-lived example that volume production comprised one among many concerns in the printing industry. As the case of William Berry points out, the Adams design quite easily handled mid-level printing of both newspapers and books. Only in publications requiring larger press sheets or high-volume printing of time sensitive material did the cylinder press provide economies that justified its cost to printers.

Labor Practices

For half a century, Adams's bed-and-platen design dominated platen designs for book production. More compact and powerful than the Treadwell power press with which it initially competed, an Adams press could be operated in an ordinary printing office without a large or specially configured workspace.[35] As instructions for the Adams press indicate, the machine could be assembled on site by a shop's own workmen.[36] Moderate size and simplicity made the press more portable than the cylinder machines against which it competed. Upgrading to a higher level of Adams bed-and-platen press

[35] Ballou, *The Building of the House*, 22.
[36] See "Directions for Putting-up Bed and Platen Printing Press," *R. Hoe & Co., Manufacturers of Type Revolving and Single and Double Cylinder Printing Machines, Power Presses (Adams' Patent), Washington and Smith Hand Presses, Self-Inking Machines, &c.* (New-York: R. Hoe & Co., [n.d.]), 49-51; and Thomas MacKellar, "Putting Up An Adams Press," in *The American Printer: A Manual of Typography, Containing Complete Instructions for Beginners, as well as Practical Directions for Managing Every Department of a Printing Office* (1866; reprint, Philadelphia: MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan, 1874), 236-244. David Pankow of the Cary Collection at Rochester Institute of Technology kindly pointed out the first reference. It is interesting to note that directions for "make ready" on a cylinder press, rather than the construction of that machine, follow MacKellar's directions for that bed-and-platen press.

did not require renovating facilities, moving to a new building, or abandoning equipment.

Not as fully mechanized or expensive as high-volume cylinder presses, the Adams power press continued to rely in part on skills familiar to hand-press workers. Many of its processes were familiar to workers who had operated a hand press; other new skills provided a transition into mechanized shops for hand-press workers, positioning them to enter the industrial era as mechanics.

The pressman imposed type or plates on the form, arranging them so that a printed sheet could be folded to form consecutive pages. In learning to adjust grippers for different sheet sizes, pressmen extended their experience of adjusting the pins, or points, that held paper to be printed against the tympan, as well as the general repairs needed by the press. A single pressman could perform these tasks and supervise several machines worked by boys or women ("girls" in contemporary printing manuals). A laborer at a crank powered early models, but the design could also accommodate a steam engine. Even as firms in the book and job sector adopted steam engines, however, hand-powered presses allowed other firms to remain competitive and to avoid the production breakdowns of an often unreliable power source.[37] In these ways, printers transferred some of their skills from the hand press to the power press, thus making the transition from hand production to the industrial era.

Technology, boys, and women replaced pressmen for other tasks. The Adams press automated the processes of inking, conveying paper to the form, registration, removing paper from the impression point, and taking the sheet to the outside of the press

[37] Warren D. Devine Jr., "The Printing Industry as a Leader in Electrification, 1883-1930," *Printing History* 7, no. 2 (1985): 27-36. Devine notes that while large firms, and especially newspaper printers, adopted electricity as early as 1883, the book and job sector showed a bifurcated energy trajectory. Small firms tended either to be early adopters of electricity, gaining advantages because of the flexibility associated with that type of power, or to maintain production through the management of hand-powered systems.

for stacking. With most of the skilled tasks completed by automation, the only duties that remained were paper handling and positioning the sheets on the feeding board. Boys brought stacks of paper to the press, flipped the sheets, and took them away for drying upon completion. Women positioned the sheets upon a feeding board, piercing them upon the pre-set points that held the paper in the correct position prior to their retrieval by the gripper mechanism. Although monotonous and tiring, feeding the machine correctly for the first side of each sheet allowed proper alignment of the second side. Either men or women could feed the press, but the company's advertising suggested that women be hired for the operation.

A stock engraving in one 1845 advertisement depicted a man at a crank powering the press while a woman stood on a platform, placing sheets into the machine.[38] In perhaps the most widely circulated illustration of the Adams power press, a woman fed paper into a machine, standing in front of a bank of machines with female attendants and mechanics overseeing the room (fig. 7.4). Taken from an 1855 history of the Harper & Brothers establishment, the engraving clearly showed a system of pulleys, connecting a room full of power presses to an unseen steam engine.[39]

The entrance of women into the pressroom through the Adams power press presented a deviation from the isolation of women in bindery positions. Female workers predominated in the hand folding sections of bookbindery departments, where wages were low and repetitive motions were integral to the job. Maintaining an aura of skilled labor around the setup functions of pressmen but redefining the feeding position as unskilled provided an opening for female operators to enter the pressroom in numbers.

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[38] *Hall's Western Farmer's Almanac, for 1846: Being the 70th-71st Year of American Independence*, no. 15 (Syracuse: Published and Sold by L.W. Hall, Wholesale & Retail, [1845]); held by AAS.
[39] Abbott, *Harper Establishment*, 120.

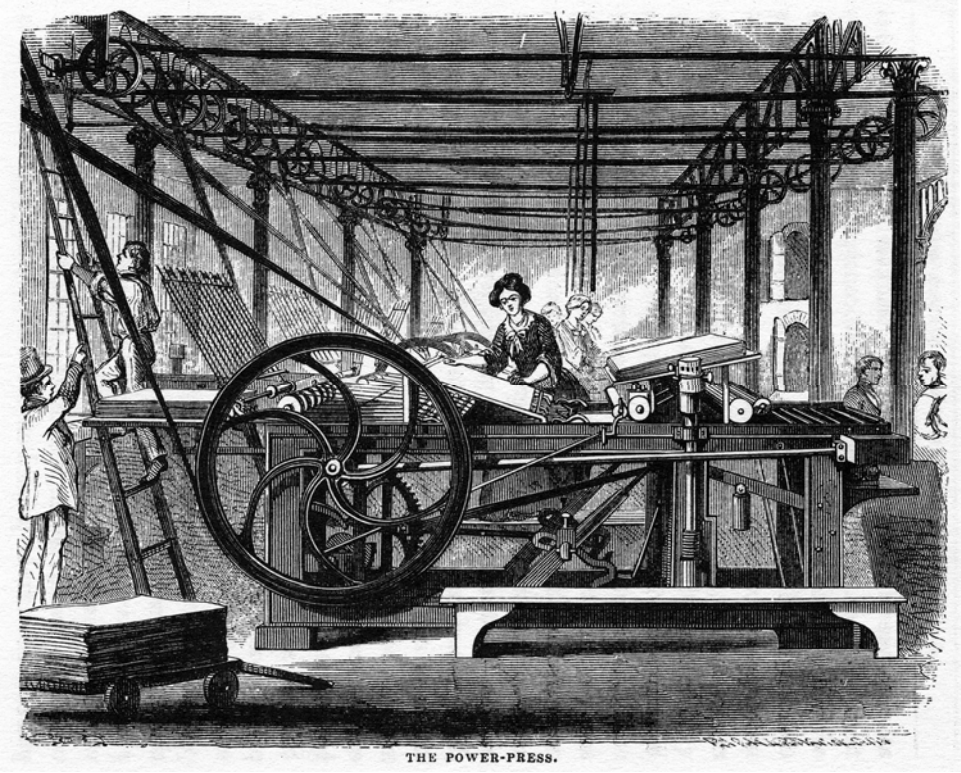

Fig. 7.4. Adams power press (1855)

Hiring women to operate a press permitted a low-paid adult to monitor the tedious but important process of positioning paper onto the retractable pins that held a sheet in place while the grippers approached, seized, and carried away the sheet. Proper setting of the grippers, the points, and the paper upon the points formed the basis of the registration system's accuracy; automation reproduced that initial positioning.

Adams's patent claims depended on several automated assemblies to ensure registration and delivery. Misplacement of paper could "foul" the press by jamming a sheet within the machinery or letting paper become stuck to the form's sticky ink. Accurately placing sheets on the points and avoiding misfeeds was so essential that a disengaging lever became part of the double-feeding press patent in 1848. The device

allowed "the person feeding the sheets, at either end of the machine, by pressing his or her foot on the treadle" to skip an impression.[40]

Isaac and Seth Adams designed unskilled labor into their power press and explicitly invited the use of women or men as operators. Yet the existence of an emergency stop-release treadle argues for the critical positioning of the feeding operator within a complex system, despite descriptions of the feeder as an unskilled worker. By incorporating limited holdover skills into pressmen's tasks, building automation into their machines, and encouraging the employment of women for tasks designated as unskilled, the designers maintained gender-differentiated divisions of labor while discretely acknowledging the importance of the unskilled feeder in ensuring continuous operation.[41]

The Adams power press became more attractive in part because of the lower wages that could be paid to the unskilled workers who operated it. In 1840, female press feeders earned $5-6 a week and pressmen $8-10 for the same period. At the same time, wages for women's bindery positions averaged about $4 a week.[42] While women in the pressroom earned more than those who collated, folded, pasted, and sewed, the relative cheapness of their labor helped to justify investment in the Adams power press.

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[40] Patent no. 9445X, reissued as no. RE116, June 13, 1848.

[41] In contrast, the iconography of cylinder presses in a range of nineteenth-century equipment catalogs studied while preparing this dissertation excludes women, showing only male feeders and stackers when operation is displayed. Harley Shaiken has noted the use of system design as a way of deskilling and taking power away from workers in a continual flow production process. Management decisions to invest in capital-intensive computer-controlled systems reflect the desire to control the workplace and to limit human involvement. Ironically, as highly automated systems become more complex, they also become more reliant upon worker knowledge and flexible decision making to limit damage caused by system glitches. See *Work Transformed: Automation and Labor in the Computer Age* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1986). Although not as capital intensive as cylinder presses, automated bed-and-platen presses can be usefully analyzed using Shaiken's insights.

[42] Carroll D. Wright, *History of Wages and Prices in Massachusetts: 1752-1883. Including comparative wages and prices in Massachusetts and Great Britain: 1860-1883 [Being Parts 3 and 4 of the Sixteenth Annual report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics and Labor]* (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1885), 120.

Gripper Marks

The Adams press fit into the day's best practices, as exemplified by Harper & Brothers. Known as Harpers, the firm was the largest American book publisher of the mid-nineteenth century. Tragically, the company suffered a devastating fire in the winter of 1853. The conflagration destroyed all the firm's buildings, presses, inventory of books, and publications in progress. Only the stereotype plates and woodcuts stored in an underground vault were spared. But the firm rebuilt, constructing a model seven-floor facility to house its famously specialized departments, all coordinated as an organic assembly line for the production of the company's publications. A complement of twenty-eight new Adams power presses replaced the ruined thirty-three, with a number of them dedicated to printing *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*.[43]

Harper & Brothers reported separating its book and magazine production from that of its newspaper, *Harper's Weekly*. Adams power presses produced the former two, and cylinder and rotary presses printed the latter. By the end of the Civil War, eight out of thirty-five Adams presses owned by Harpers operated at all times on the magazine, with women feeding the machines that printed about 110,000 copies of the periodical each month.[44]

This exclusive connection makes possible confirmation of production marks found on the *Monthly Magazine* as belonging to the Adams power press. In a survey of copies primarily held by the Boston Public Library and the New York Public Library from the magazine's establishment in 1850 until three years after the Civil War, paired

[43] "A Word of Apology," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 8, no. 44 (January 1854): 1-3 details the damage caused by the fire. Abbott's *Harper Establishment* provides the most detailed, yet readable, account of American book production practices during the middle of the nineteenth century.
[44] A.H. Guernsey, "Making the Magazine," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 32, no.187 (December 1865): 1-31, esp. 2, 15-17, and 30.

indentations can be detected. The production marks are visible in at least one location on most copies of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, and always in a position consistent with octavo imposition.[45]

That pattern was among the more common in nineteenth-century American printing and gained its name for the eight plates that comprised the building blocks of the final publication. In the simplest octavo imposition, a printer placed eight plates carefully on the form to print one side of the paper and then exchanged the plates for another set of eight to perfect the sheet. Each plate printed one-eighth of the total sheet, forming sixteen pages of text. The two sets of eight plates together comprised a *signature*, usually indicated by a numeral on the first page of the set.[46] Both printers and bindery workers paid special attention to the signings, which indicated the order in which gatherings should be collated and bound. The finished sheet, if accurately imposed and printed, would be folded three times to form a gathering. When sliced open at the folded edges, an eightmo (octavo) format presented the reader with a book approximately 6" x 9-1/2", comprised of gatherings of eight leaves, or sixteen pages.[47] Upon inspection, the

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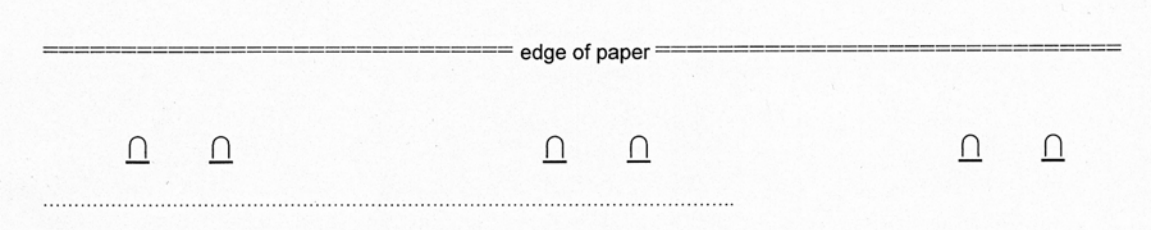
[45] "The descriptive names of the sizes of Books refer only to the sizes of the leaves, and not to the size of the form," advised Theodore L. De Vinne in *The Printer's Price List*, introduction by Irene Tichenor (1871; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 351. Although printers in America used the term *octavo* to describe imposition, but bibliographers have come to use the word as one category describing a printing format, or the number of leaves upon a form at the time of printing. While the precision of bibliographical terms is crucial in revealing production details, historical accuracy requires distinguishing between nineteenth-century and modern usages of octavo. In this dissertation, *octavo imposition* refers specifically to the scheme for imposing a form, and *octavo format* indicates that eight leaves were printed with each impression. In this way, the generalities of past practice and the specificity of bibliographical inquiry can be reconciled. An authoritative discussion of bibliographical format has been laid out by G. Thomas Tanselle in "The Concept of Format," *SB* 53 (2000): 67-115, esp. 112-13.

[46] While *page* refers to the text facing of a book, *leaf* denotes the single unit of paper upon which two pages are printed. Leaf is a more useful term for bibliographers because of its relationship to the printed sheet, rather than to the text.

[47] The formal names of common formats achieved strictly by folding are: folio, once; quarto, twice; octavo, three times; and sextodecimo, four times. Duodecimo and octodecimo required workers to cut a strip of leaves from one side before folding the two portions and tucking them together to form a gathering. A multitude of impositions may be used to achieve necessary formats, generally with impositions doubled in order to print twenty-four, thirty-two, thirty-six, sixty-four, or more leaves as a single impression; for



3/4" center-to-center within pairs; 1-7/8" between pairs (not to scale). The indentations consist of a semi-circular segment with a slightly detached-looking bar closing off the "U". They usually appear 1/4" from the edge of the paper, although distance varies from 1/32" to about 3/4". The dotted line represents a crease that also may appear.

Fig. 7.5. Adams power press gripper marks (diagram)

indentations appear with a regularity that defies random generation. Pairs of U-shaped dimples with a top bar range across the full fore edge or portions of the fore edge of certain leaves (fig. 7.5). In some volumes, only pairs of bars can be seen. In others, a slight crease about 1/8" from the bar or full dimple is visible. Patent specifications noted a 1/8" inch difference in length between grippers that may account for that crease.[48]

According to Jacob Abbott's description of the magazine's production on an Adams power press, a woman fed paper into the press and watched for potential problems with automated delivery and printing. A boy collected the worked off sheets, turned them over, and placed them back in a stack to be refed into the press for perfecting. The finished sheet, if accurately imposed and printed, would be folded three times by a female bindery worker. Using the signature to check the order of gatherings,

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instance, Thomas F. Adams's *Typographia: or The Printer's Instructor* (1844; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1981) lists among a moderate number of imposition schemes a method for achieving a half sheet of one hundred twenty-eight leaves with eight signatures. William Savage offered a remarkably extensive range of impositions for producing various formats in *A Dictionary of the Art of Printing* (1841; reprint, London: Gregg Press, 1966). The names of formats were shortened by Americans and English printers. In the United States, the chief formats were eightmo, twelvemo, sixteenmo, eighteenmo, etc., with nineteenth-century printers often adding a hyphen prior to the suffix. English printers reported the same formats as eights, twelves, sixteens, and eighteens, etc.

[48] Ben Shackleford, Ph.D. from the Georgia Institute of Technology, has noted the similarity of these gripper marks to those used in the steel industry during the nineteenth century. Steel plates used for various industrial purposes in nineteenth-century America bore similar U-shaped marks to increase friction in clutching processes.

the worker collated the folded sections to form the body of a publication. A workman then punched three holes close to the spine using a stabbing machine, and another women in the bindery department stitched the entire group of gatherings together and glued a paper wrapper onto the text block.

Further details of the publication's production exclude the possibility that a folding machine could have made the indentations, because women hand folded the magazine. Pressing machines, sometimes used to straighten dried sheets, also can be eliminated. Sandwiched between hard pasteboards and crushed under one of the firm's powerful hydraulic presses, a sheet could not have gained indentations; rather, little trace of unevenness would remain on any page. In ruling out post-printing processing as the source of these marks, only those of the printing press itself remain.[49]

Patent descriptions of the Adams press note that a spring-activated set of hinged steel plates closed together to grasp a sheet of paper, but exactly how that clamping mechanism created indents is not clear. Patent drawings include the gripper carriage and point of contact but lack details that might give clues about indentations caused by the point of pressure. Unfortunately, the reissued drawing depicts the closed grippers from the side, offering no information about interlocking features that may have indented the sheets (lower center, fig. 7.6).[50]

Additional examples show the indentations on American Bibles, while providing evidence that publishers could achieve volume production through bed-and-platen

[49] Abbott, *Harper Establishment*. Harold E. Sterne's *Catalogue of Nineteenth Century Bindery Equipment* (Cincinnati: Ye Olde Printery, 1978) provides assistance in eliminating folding devices.
[50] Patent no. 9445X, reissued as no. RE116, June 13, 1848. The gripper mechanism is depicted as "Fig. 11," bottom center of the diagram; the closed gripper plates point upward and to the right. The entire carriage to which the gripper was attached moved from the feeder board to the point of impression for each sheet to be printed.

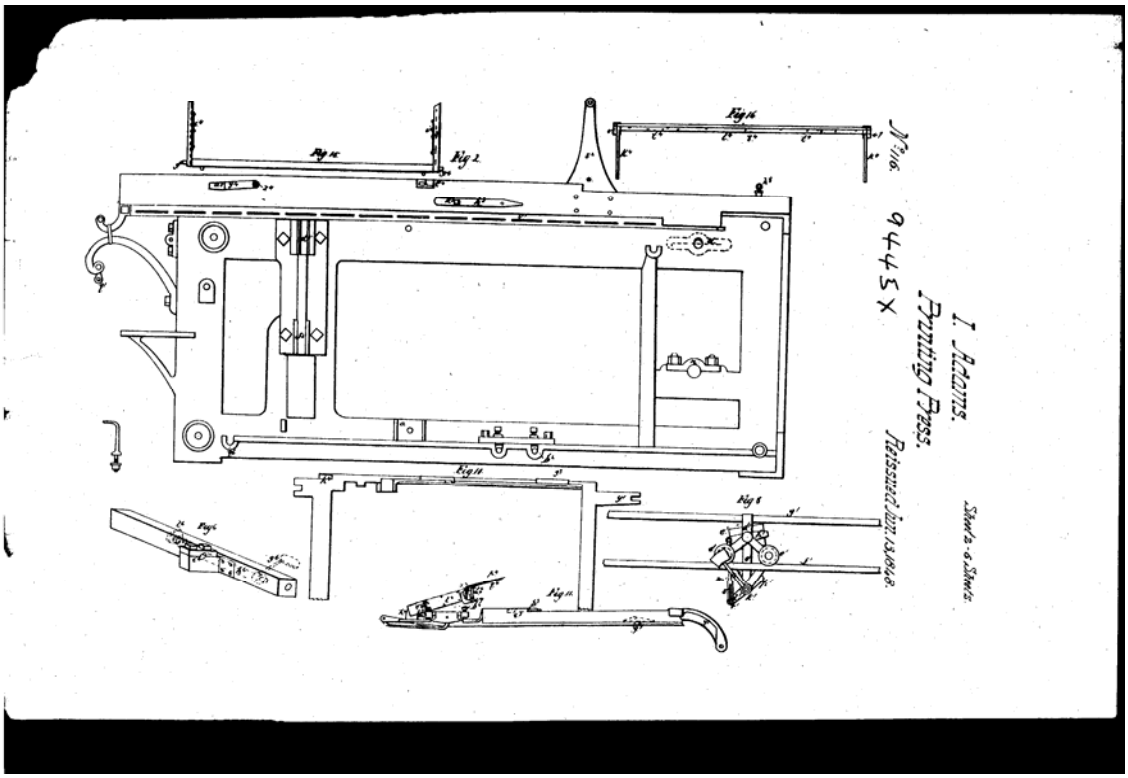

Fig. 7.6. 1848 patented gripper mechanism (bottom center)

presses. In a sample of fifty-four Bibles published from 1830 to 1890 in various cities by American publishers, eleven were found to contain gripper marks.[51] The first example, in a Boston Bible, appeared in 1842; Cincinnati, 1848; New York City, 1854; and Baltimore and Philadelphia, 1860. American Bible Society books contained gripper marks in 1854, 1860, and 1872, or in one-third of the Society's books reviewed.[52]

[51] The author sampled books in six-year increments from the AAS's large collection of American Bibles with the intent of keeping out of the sample duplicates of works published during a given year. Octavo and smaller formats were selected to represent, as best as possible, not only the publications of major Bible publishers but also those from outside of the Boston-New York-Philadelphia publishing triangle. The majority of items surveyed were published by 1860 and increasingly in New York, reflecting the American Bible Society's dominance of the genre, as well as the collection policy of the American Antiquarian Society, which has limited holdings of post-1876 books. The number of books surveyed by year (and number of those from the American Bible Society) was for 1830, 9 (2); 1836, 8 (2); 1842, 9 (3); 1848, 5 (3); 1854, 7 (2); 1860, 7 (2); 1866, 4 (1); 1872, 2 (2); 1878, 0 (0); 1884, 1 (1); and 1890, 2 (2).

[52] Gripper marks are evidence of production with the Adams power press, but their absence does not exclude that press from having produced a certain book. Processing for good quality books often included flattening the sheets prior to folding. Once folded, a forwarding worker pounded together the gatherings,

The American Bible Society consistently declined to use cylinder presses until well after the Civil War, even to meet its goal of supplying a Bible to every household in America. The Society preferred to churn out large editions using steam-powered bed-and-platen presses. The firm's printer, Daniel Fanshaw, unsuccessfully proposed that the Bible Society assist him in purchasing larger and more modern machines. Failing permission for that transition, he used Treadwell presses years after others had upgraded to other presses. After the early 1830s, the relatively small size of the 18" x 23" sheets that the press could accommodate made that equipment much less desirable for book printing, and Fanshaw may have been the last printer in the country to use Treadwell's design. In 1844, the Society purchased its own presses and began in-house publishing, rather than contracting out its printing to Fanshaw or another printer.[53]

The Society used bed-and-platen presses, rejecting cylinder designs, even though sizeable printing establishments frequently printed with both types of presses. Press type gave a general indication of the anticipated use of equipment, but actual printer practices at times differed from expectations.[54] The Adams power press likely served much of the organization's need for reliable machinery that did not damage stereotyped plates. The machine's up-lifting form made a gentler impression than other steam presses, preserving plate details not only over long first runs but also through subsequent reprintings.[55]

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ensuring a uniform thickness and shape to the final product. The pressing, forwarding, and trimming that bound copies underwent make the persistence of gripper indentations all the more remarkable.

[53] Green, "Early American Power Printing Presses," 148-149.

[54] Consider, for instance, Robert Hoe's irritation at not being able to sell cylinder presses to the American Bible Society even after citing the fact that book publishers in England used the machines that the Society refused. See Comparato, *Chronicle*, 364.

[55] Use of the Hoe bed-and-platen press at the American Bible Society made Isaac Adams aware of possible patent infringement by the Hoe Company, straining relations between the two manufacturers and damaging Hoe's reputation in the industry. Without Hoe's presses, only the Adams power press could have produced enough volume to provide Bibles to all Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War (Frank Comparato, *Chronicles*, 358-360). The Society invested in stereotyping before any major American

Hoe records show that in 1847, the firm supplied at least one bed-and-platen press as the company attempted to compete with the Adams design. The press's performance proved to be less than adequate. Upon the Society's acquisition of larger facilities in 1852, the Hoe press was discarded. Hoe's experience with the American Bible Society predicted the market performance of that press. The company's bed-and-platen models never achieved a competitive position among printers.[56]

Anecdotal evidence gathered from books advertised as power press publications and Bibles suggests that other American power presses did not produce this type of mark. An American Antiquarian Society catalog search for books ascribed to power press printers yielded a small number of titles for examination. None of eight titles printed on a Treadwell power press between 1822 and 1828 contained similar indentations; nor did either of the two Tuft's power press works published in 1838. Of four books printed on power presses of unknown models from 1837 to 1864, only one revealed indentations.[57]

Taken together, these samples provide further evidence that the Adams power press produced a unique pattern of indentations upon printed sheets. That information can

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publisher, in part because of its insistence on providing unchanging texts with little commentary. As it turned out, this strategy eliminated the cost of typesetting subsequent printings. Using the Adams design would have protected the upfront investment of stereotyping and caused significantly less wear to the stereotype plates than the use other presses. See Paul C. Gutjahr, *An American Bible: A History of the Good Book in the United States, 1777-1880* (Stanford: Stanford University Pres, 1999), 12-13, esp. 29-30. On the tendency of American printers to make plates of books much more readily than British counterparts, see Winship, "Printing with Plates." Contemporary printing manuals noted the excellence of the Adams power press in reducing wear on type and avoiding the damage that cylinders caused to the outer edge of a locked form at the start of an impression.

[56] Comparato, *Chronicles*, 358.

[57] The catalog search produced eighteen books with fourteen different titles (volumes in the same series were counted as one title). The item published in 1864 that bears gripper marks was published in Atlanta, Georgia, showing the presence of Adams presses in regions other than New York and Boston. A copy of George Thompson's *Jack Harold* (New York: P.F. Harris, 1853) known to have been printed by a printer who advertised his use of an Adams steam power press within the covers of the book, was located by title search at AAS. It bore indentations similar to a copy of the same book held at LOC.

be employed as a tool for better understanding the operations of clandestine publishers, such as William Berry of Boston.

William Berry

Bookwork and newspaper production may have been considered the relative specialties of Adams power presses and Hoe cylinder presses in America, but the publishing strategy of William Berry in Boston took advantage of the flexible production capability designed into the Adams power press to do both types of work. Starting in 1849, Berry copyrighted a number of books and newspapers considered racy by contemporary standards. Gripper marks on two of those publications – a crime newspaper, *Life in Boston*, and a semi-erotic book, *The Countess* – establish Berry's use of the Adams power press for producing works that established his notoriety.

Berry conducted business in Boston using numerous partnerships, and his business associations provided advantages to him. Many antebellum entrepreneurs in Boston preferred partnerships even after corporate forms had begun to offer legal advantages, according to Naomi Lamoreaux.[58]

This especially proved true in the case of publishers such as Berry. His partnerships offered financial backing, expertise, or resources to assist in his daily operations. Berry drew into his printing network tradesmen who might advance through that connection. Printers especially comprised those whose names were listed along with Berry's, and they undoubtedly provided labor and equipment for the publisher's operations. As his operations moved to New York circles, his stereotyped plates and

[58] Naomi Lamoreaux, "The Partnership Form of Organization: Its Popularity in Early-Nineteenth-Century Boston," in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1700-1850*, ed. Conrad Edick Wright and Katheryn P. Viens (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1997), 269-95.

printing materials became more closely associated with clandestine publishing, leaving historians at a loss in explaining his precise involvement in subsequent printings of texts originally associated with Boston.

From the commencement of his publishing efforts in 1849, city directories, imprints, and copyright records indicate that he used a variety of names. He teamed with W.L. Bradbury, a printer, to form Bradbury & Berry in 1849, then became partners the following year with another printer, Henry Wright, in Wright & Berry (Berry & Wright). From 1850 to 1855, he published books under the name of William Berry & Co. (1850-55). While Bradbury and Wright disappeared, several other Bostonians appear to have become aware of Berry through his promotion of *Life in Boston* in the first years of that decade.

By 1856, he had teamed up with Timothy Bigelow and Luther Colby to publish *Banner of Light*. Bigelow studied law in the vicinity in the late 1840s and remained to become a legal counselor in Boston, but he remained a named partner in the publishing business only one year. Luther Colby, a printer by trade, was a resident of Boston for more than a decade before his association with Berry. In 1857, the printer and publisher formed their own partnership of Luther Colby & Co., continuing the newspaper. Berry's venture then became known as Colby, Forster, & Co. in 1858 when T.G. Forster and J.R. [Rollin] M. Squire joined in. Another recombination occurred in 1860, when Forster dropped out and Squire continued to remain a silent partner in Berry, Colby & Co.

Berry finally reverted to the name of William Berry & Co. in 1861, with his partnerships submerged and out of the public eye. Like many other men, he disappeared from local directory listings during the Civil War, during which time he probably served

as a soldier. After the war, he returned to Boston in 1867 and briefly became part of the public listing as a boarder with no occupation noted. By the next year, however, he once again had disappeared from the public records. Berry remained behind the scenes in certain of his partnerships, and taking an active role in producing more publications and in operating more ventures than those that bear his name.[59]

Although not mentioned in city directories as part of Willis Little & Co., Berry joined in operating that firm's news depot, which sold the most popular local and national periodicals, fiction, advice books, and business publications. In an 1850 catalog, Berry's name appeared with W. Little & Co., along with an engraving of the firm's "Great Periodical Depot" (fig. 7.7).[60]

The illustration shows the depot crowded with men perusing the store's offerings, and a police officer attending the shop entrance. The patrolman's outward-looking stance seems to ally him with the store, and the broadsides listing new works attract the attention of a country traveler who stands with a broad-rimmed hat, standing at the side, surveying activity within the building. Young, disheveled, and street-smart boys hawk newspapers to passersby. Berry's *Life in Boston*, unlisted in the attached catalog detailing the weeklies offered at the store, lay on the counter beside a publication named *Flag* in front of a store clerk. The thoroughly masculine setting gives an indication that Willis Little catered to male readers, providing a gender segregated commercial space where even urchins might set their sights on making their mark as men of business.

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[59] He may also have done business with J.M. Davidson as a merchant in 1847 under the name William Berry & Co. That partnership seems to have lasted only one year. The date given for partnerships is the same as each publication date, as directories were published in the summer, after the traditional period of spring moving. In some cases, however, the partnership began the preceding fall, as evidenced by copyright records. *Boston City Directories*.

[60] "Programme of the funeral ceremonies in honor of the late president of the United States. *Boston,* August 15, 1850," BDSDS, AAS. In this advertisement and a publisher's advertisement for *Life and Exploits* (1850), the firm is referred to as W. Little & Co.

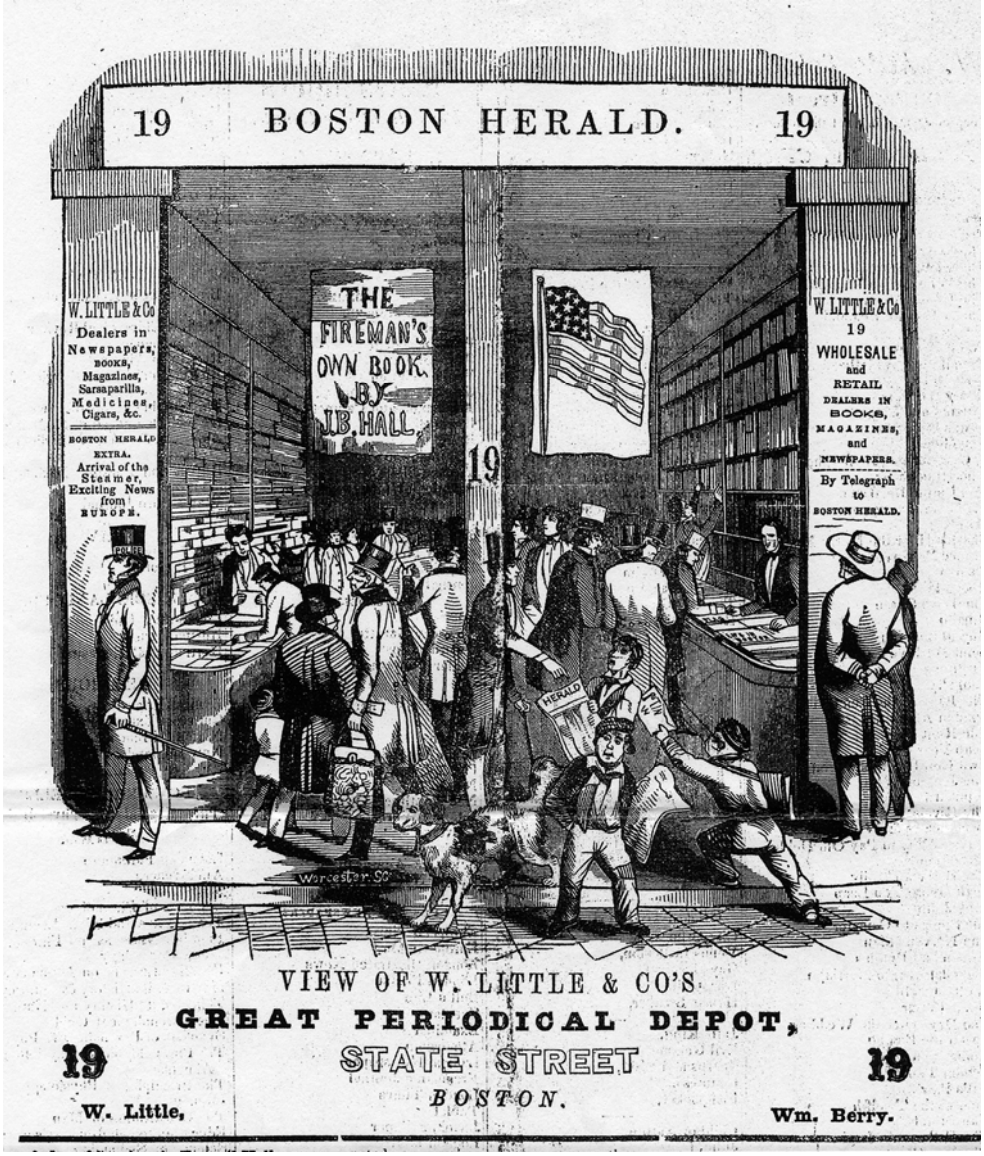

Fig. 7.7. W. Little & Co.'s Great Periodical Depot (1848)

F.E. Worcester crafted two open blocks, allowing the titles of new publications to be placed in central squares that hung like banners from the depot's high ceiling. Berry's name appeared with that of W. Little & Co. on either side of the engraving's title. The folio advertisement, printed as a promotional program to be handed out for the funeral procession of former President Zachary Taylor in Boston on August 15, 1850, listed several Berry imprints. Those titles appeared in a section dominated by the works of

Greenhorn and Paul de Kock, two of the *noms de plume* that can be traced to the popular sensational fiction writer, George Thompson. At the same time, Berry's local address in 1851 became that of Willis Little & Co., while the former occupants disappeared from the city directory.[61]

According to Berry's publisher catalogs bound in with his books throughout the 1850s, he also sold books across the country through direct mail to consumers, to news depots across the country, and to traveling salesmen. He cooperated with a concern identified as Howland & Co. of New York to supply western and southern agents. His advertisements encouraged agents and readers to order literature in bulk to gain volume discounts. Several of those with whom he partnered came from the printing trades.

Partnership with Berry provided an opportunity to become a publisher, rather than mere printer, during a period when providing capital and labor were becoming increasingly different functions in printing. Timothy Bigelow, a local counselor-at-law, can be identified as a likely financial backer, because he lacked the printing skills typical of Berry's associates. More often, Berry chose as partners printing tradesmen who lodged at boarding houses, or infrequently, at the business location, much as many journeymen printers in Boston did during the antebellum years.[62]

More information about two of his partners can be traced primarily through their union affiliations and the network that evolved from their associations with Berry. Henry Wright and Luther Colby took active roles in the city's printing trades organizations. In the years following the dissolution of Wright's partnership with Berry in 1850, and the transfer of copyright for the firm's materials to Berry, Wright represented the Boston

[61] "Programme of the funeral ceremonies."
[62] *Boston City Directories.*

Printers' Union at its 1852 rechartering. The resulting organization became Boston Typographical Union No. 13, a branch of the newly founded National Typographical Union. In 1856, Wright became "Father of the Chapel" at White's Job Office, which appears to have been run by William White. In that year, *Life in Boston*, with Berry's name no longer publicly associated with it, gained recognition as a union shop and appointed its own chapel chairman.[63]

Luther Colby, a resident of Boston during the early 1840s and a printer by the last part of that decade, became active in the trade's local organizations. In the 1840s, he claimed membership in the Boston Typographical Society, which was founded earlier in the century by prominent printers. In 1848, certain Boston-area printers asserted that their interests were not being adequately represented, and organized the competing Boston Printers' Union; thereafter, the Typographical Society failed. By at least 1859, Colby had joined the surviving Boston union.[64] Luther Colby had a long-standing relationship with Berry, who acted as an unnamed partner for a number of firms in which Colby was involved from 1855 to 1859. In 1859, Colby became co-copyright owner of *Banner of Light*, which he and Berry operated under several names. In the 1860s, *Banner of Light* came under the control of William White.

William White was a partner in White, Lewis & Potter in 1845; by the next year, he had formed a company with R.K. Potter as White & Potter. In 1853, the firm procured government printing contracts as the state's printer, but Potter departed the following year to go into business with a sibling. White printed a small number of jobs for Ticknor

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[63] Boston Typographical Union, comp., *Leaves of History from the Archives of Boston Typographical Union,* no. 8*, from the Foundation of the Boston Typographical Society to the Diamond Jubilee of Its Successor* (Boston: Boston Typographical Union, 1923), 7-10; *Boston City Directories*.
[64] Boston Typographical Union, *Leaves of History*, 3-6.

and Fields, a prominent Boston literary publishing house. He maintained the business and state contracts until 1860, when A.J. Wright and R.K. Potter bought out his firm.[65] By the late 1860s, a new associate emerged for White. With a clerk named Charles H. Crowell, he operated as William White & Co., publishing *Banner of Light* and numerous spiritualist books through the Banner of Light Office.

In 1871, the firm copyrighted and published an American edition of Le Brun's *Doubts of Infidels*, a treatise outlining factual errors in the Bible and the fallacy of literal Christian belief. As the Christian church became more tainted and impure, Spiritualists were those who could best reform society, according to the essay.[66] Colby later became a publisher primarily of spiritualist literature, prospering during the 1870s and remaining active through the 1890s. As a partner in Colby & Rich in the early 1870s, he reissued William White's edition, using the same plates for its printing and offering a comparable publisher binding for its sale.[67]

If Wright and Colby followed the practices of other union men in their city, male workers dominated the shops they operated. The status of women in the trade proved problematic for male unionists. A proposed resolution in 1856 to strip male printers of union membership for working in a shop that employed women failed. The following year, a strategic union statement demanded equal wages for women printers. The wage resolution was intended to force employers to oust women from non-bindery work that had become mixed in gender. The advantage of integrating women into other operations

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[65] Warren S. Tryon and William Charvat, *The Cost Books of Ticknor and Fields and Their Predecessors, 1832-1858* (New York: The Bibliographical Society of America, 1949), 473-474.
[66] Zepa, *An Eye-Opener. "Citateur, par Pigault."* Le Brun*, Doubts of Infidels: Embodying Thirty Important Questions to the Clergy. Also Forty Close Questions to the Doctors of Divinity* (Boston: William White and Company, 1871), held at LOC and by author. Ashbee commented, "The ignorant misprinting on the title-page is sufficient to show that this volume is more curious than valuable." See Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Catena Librorum Tacendorum* (1885; reprint, New York: Documentary Books, Inc., 1962), 481.
[67] Zepa, *An Eye-Opener.*

lay in their lower wages, which would be forfeited if women were paid equally to men. By forcing employers to pay full wages to women, the union pressured owners to keep shops all male.

It took three decades for the Boston union to admit its first female member, despite the 1857 declaration that women could be accepted in any branch of the printing trades as long as employers paid them union scale. That delay belies the intention of the resolution to provide equal wages for women. Such policies reduced incentives for hiring women to fill traditionally male jobs rather than elevating women's wages. Nevertheless, the equal wages clause recognized the emergence of women into formerly male bastions of the printing trades.[68]

Until 1888, union membership stood for preserving the masculine work environment of the print shop. Women's names are absent from Berry's partnerships. Another factor that may point toward male press workers is the transience of his business location. From the start, Berry's business address hopped along the main streets of Boston's printing district. His given place of business changed eight times during the first nine years of his enterprise.[69]

Berry's residential locations followed the pattern of printers-turned-publishers in Boston: When his business did well, Berry lived farther from work and in areas of town associated with the residences of established printers. In the last years of his operations, he became more transient and boarded at hotels. During those later years, Berry and his associates increasingly found lodgings at boarding houses or lived on the shop premises,

[68] Boston Typographical Union, *Leaves of History*, 10-11.
[69] *Boston City Directories.*

more like single young men embarking on their careers than established publishers.[70] The picture of Berry that emerges is of an entrepreneur with a canny knack for forming relationships with people whose skills he needed to operate a printing shop, news depot, or mail order house. He took care to place notices in the city directory so buyers could locate him amidst his frequent relocations, at times listing only a popular periodical and the address at which it could be procured rather than the name of the firm selling it.

Life in Boston and *The Countess*

Despite the frequent relocation of his operations, Berry's business showed signs early on of expanding dramatically and allowing him to break into the publishing field. In 1848, W.L. Bradbury of Boston published *The Housebreaker*, a novel by George Thompson, who became one of America's most popular writers of sensational fiction. A rough woodcut in that book signed "Berry" gives the first clue to the partnership of Bradbury & Berry that emerged in 1849.[71] In 1849 and 1850, William Berry began filing for copyright on Thompson's works, gaining the rights to material published in at least eight books written by the highly marketable but scandalous author. Many of those novels appeared serially in the weekly newspaper, *Life in Boston*, which also published

[70]For a picture of how residential and occupational patterns intersected in Boston before 1850, see Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, "The Boston Book Trades, 1789-1850: A Statistical and Geographical Analysis," in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community*, 211-67. The Zborays draw their conclusions from an intensive study of city directories of the period. Likewise, Timothy J. Gilfoyle charts the geographic distribution of brothels and vice districts in *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992) This type of research holds great promise for tracking the operations of marginal entrepreneurs and comparing their business patterns with the large publishing houses, whose intact publishing archives have lent themselves more readily to scrutiny.

[71]George Thompson, *The House Breaker; or, The Mysteries of Crime* (Boston: W.L. Bradbury, 1848). The opening pages of *The House Breaker* are identical to *Anna Mowbray; or, Tales of the Harem* (New York: Henry R.J. Barkley, [185-?]), except for Thompson's exchange of geographic references from Boston locations to New York. The type was reset. (*The House Breaker*: four gatherings of six. *Anna Mowbray*, remnant: first six leaves, probably also in sixes, with a publisher advertisement using a Willis Little-style border.)

the copyright notices. Readers bought the weekly newspaper filled with crime stories, gossip, fiction installments, and advertisements for racy reading, for 6-1/4 cents an issue.

Life in Boston can be linked to the Adams power press and its attendant production system through the gripper marks embedded in its pages. A copy of *Life in Boston* from Sept. 1, 1849, published by Berry & Wright, clearly exhibits gripper indentations on its once-folded newspaper-grade sheets of paper. A single leaf of the publication measured about 19" x 25", making a sheet of approximately 25" x 38" when unfolded. Gripper indentations range across the tops of both leaves comprising the sheet. The gripper marks lie less than half an inch from, and parallel to, the paper's edge. A slight crease is visible about 1/8" farther away from the edge. At the corner of each sheet, the impressions become deeper.[72]

Nineteenth-century printing equipment catalogs often listed press sizes by the measure of the machine's platen or bed size. Paper dimensions for a press typically fell about two inches smaller than platen length and width, with bigger presses requiring larger, and smaller presses lesser, adjustment. In 1844, I. Adams & Co. introduced a 26" x 40" press that quickly became popular. At least by 1851, two models could be purchased. The lower-level model, costing $1550, came with two rollers and was adequate for producing newspaper and cheap bookwork. A higher quality press with six rollers and superior inking mechanisms for the better class of bookwork could be purchased for $1755.[73]

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[72] *Life in Boston, Sporting Chronicle, and Lights and Shadows of New England Morals* 1 (Sept. 1, 1849), Boston Newspapers Collection, AAS.

[73] *Specimens of Printing Types and Ornaments, from the New England Type & Stereotype Foundery* [sic] (Hobart & Robbins, successors to Geo. A. Curtis, 66 Congress Street, Boston, 1851), held at LOC.

In the pages of *Life in Boston*, Berry and Wright promoted several books copyrighted and sold by Berry, including one for which he filed for copyright in the spring of 1849 in the District Court of Massachusetts.[74] A loose collection of racy adventures, the book of fiction "revealed" scandals surrounding a bevy of American Venuses. The author excused his knowledge of the affairs by explaining, implausibly enough, that he overheard the revelations during the private club's monthly gathering. The actual writer of the novel, George Thompson, penned perhaps one hundred books and countless articles for sensational newspapers through the 1870s. Berry copyrighted *The Countess*, and Thompson probably received a lump payment for his work.[75]

In the first publication of *The Countess*, held at the Yale Beinecke Library, Berry & Wright numbered the novel for one hundred pages, perhaps using the large round number to emphasize to purchasers the book's length and completeness.[76] Numbering that presumed the inclusion of frontispieces drew together illustrations and text together, even though oftentimes combinations of the two types of printing served publisher convenience more closely than they corresponded as book elements. The pagination also had the effect of advertising the book as being complete only when accompanied by paired frontispieces, drawing together often barely related illustrations and text through the interest of buyers in semi-erotic illustrations or the willingness of readers to fashion interpretative meanings.

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[74] *Copyright Right Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870*, District Court of the State of Massachusetts (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held at LOC. The actual title page filed by Berry can be found in *Copyright Title Pages of the United States*, 1790-1870, Early Copyright Records Collection, LOC.

[75] Between 1840 and 1873, George Thompson only copyrighted one book in the major publishing centers of New York City and Boston, in which most American fiction publishing took place and where he resided. *Copyright Record Books*, Courts of Massachusetts and the Southern District of New York.

[76] Yale University holds the copy of *The Countess* duplicated for the Wright Fiction Series microfilm project, making the text but not the physical properties of that book available for researchers. Wright *American Fiction Series*, I, 2583.

More than a simple manipulation of perception may have been at play, however. The pagination correctly reflected the number of standard-sized sheets of paper in the publication. Postal regulations in the two decades before 1845 had required that the number of sheets within certain types of printed matter be marked on the outside of the publication. Revisions in 1845 changed rates to a distance basis for publications, with newspapers restricted not by the square inches of the sheets used, but like other types of print, metered by weight. Booksellers could easily estimate the weight of an item even without a scale if publications were printed on standard weight papers; proportioned according to trade customs for folio, quarter, and octavo formats; and paginated to include inserted matter. Berry publications, numbered at 100 pages with an octavo imposition and two frontispieces, commonly weighed four ounces or less.

While bound books were not mailable until 1851, unbound publications of that weight could have been mailed at the steep letter rate of 5 cents per one-half ounce for 300 miles, or 10 cents per increment for farther distances. Books in wrappers, or printed sheets destined for binding with paper covers, presented little danger of damaging other items in the mail, unlike the bound books that were not permitted to be carried on postal routes. Depending upon the interpretation of postal regulations by a postmaster, unbound books of the type printed by Berry may have been admissible as printed matter, allowing them to be mailed for 5-1/2 cents for any distance.

Through the start of 1851, “all other printed or other matter” lay in a gray area of postal practice that attempted to regulate the accommodation of postal services to expanding forms of print. Berry’s books potentially crossed genres in a manner similar to newspaper supplements, which in 1843 were determined to be permissible as printed

matter, but not as newspapers eligible for preferential rates. In March of 1851, bound books officially could be mailed at 1 cent per ounce for the first 500 miles, with rates doubling, trebling, and quadrupling for distances up to 1,500, 2,500, and 3,500 miles. In August of 1852, postal officials recognized that bound or unbound books might be mailed, with simplified rates of 1 cent per ounce, up to 3,000 miles, or twice that rate for greater distances governing their admission to the mails.[77]

The Yale copy of *The Countess* contains six gatherings of eight leaves, averaging about 6" x 9-1/8" each.[78] The rough edges of that copy indicate that the customer would tear open the pages rather than having them trimmed by a binder. That lack of trimming allows the leaf size to be multiplied by four across the width and by two across the height, without trimming adjustments, to figure out the minimum size of paper on which those pages could have been printed. The original sheet size that results is about 18-1/4" x 24," or very close to the standard paper size of 19" x 24".[79]

Yale's copy exhibits gripper marks, but the production details of that book present a challenging bibliographical puzzle. By studying the gripper pattern, it becomes evident

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[77] For postal rate changes from 1825 to 1851, see United States Post Office Department, *Postage Rates 1789-1930*, 4-7. Rates for mailing printed matter and books were higher without prepayment of postage. Books could be mailed in packages of up to four pounds, allowing up to sixteen four-ounce books to be shipped to a single address at postal rates.

[78] A republication of *The Countess* held by the American Antiquarian Society includes all of the text for the book retypeset, with the addition of seventeen pages of *The Twin Brothers*, another Thompson novel. *The Twin Brothers* advance copy filled in a final page of *The Countess* that otherwise would have been blank and added another gathering of eight leaves. As teaser material, the extract tied readers in to an upcoming title and stimulated demand for another racy and sensational book published by Berry. The AAS copy lacks frontispieces, and the pattern of gripper marks matches common octavo in a single pattern throughout the book, differing from that of the Yale holding, but avoiding gripper marks on the title page. As discussed in chapter six, a copy of *Julia King* at AAS includes those missing frontispieces. Published by W. Berry & Co. at 11 Devonshire Place, the AAS copy of *The Countess* can be dated as being published in 1851 (or 1852), about two years after the first edition held at Yale.

[79] De Vinne's *Price List* contains numerous useful charts for sizes, prices, and markup rates for printing historians. See, for example, "Sizes of Paper for Different Forms," 353, used for this calculation.

from the gripper mark pattern that the pressman imposing the form deviated from a single imposition:

> Gathering 1: grippers on fore edges of leaves 6 and 7 (pp. 11-14)
> Gathering 2: grippers on fore edges of leaves 1 and 4 (pp. 1-2 and 7-8)
> Gathering 3: grippers on fore edges of leaves 1 and 4 (pp. 1-2 and 7-8)
> Gathering 4: no grippers evident
> Gathering 5: grippers on fore edges of leaves 1 and 4 (pp. 1-2 and 7-8)
> Gathering 6: grippers on fore edges of leaves 1 and 4 (pp. 1-2 and 7-8)

Other copies of books from the period show a similar arrangement. Imposition of the first gathering as inverted octavo was, in fact, the norm for many shops. The reason lay in a defect in common octavo imposition, which placed the title page on the outermost portion of the form. If a pressman placed the first leaf of a signature on the far left of the closest row as indicated by manuals of the era, the title page fell within an area potentially indented by grippers. More significantly, a title page or an illustration placed on the outside of a form could result in the printing of spacing matter along with type.

Pages with little type or with a large amount of spacing material required careful inking to ensure that the lower, non-printing areas at the edge of the form received no ink. Imposing the first gathering as common octavo increased the likelihood of ink smears on the title page. An inverted imposition countered that problem. *Figure 7.8* shows the outer and inner form schemes for common octavo (upper diagrams) and inverted octavo (lower diagrams). The numbering of plates refers to page numbers.[80]

In preparing *The Countess* to be printed, the pressman imposed the first signature from the center, using an inverted common octavo pattern. Gripper marks on the fore edges of leaves six and seven in that gathering indicate that the title page plate was placed on the inside of the press bed rather than outside. Most of the remaining gatherings

[80] Adams, *Typographia,*118, with imposition schemes on 126-127 and 132-133.

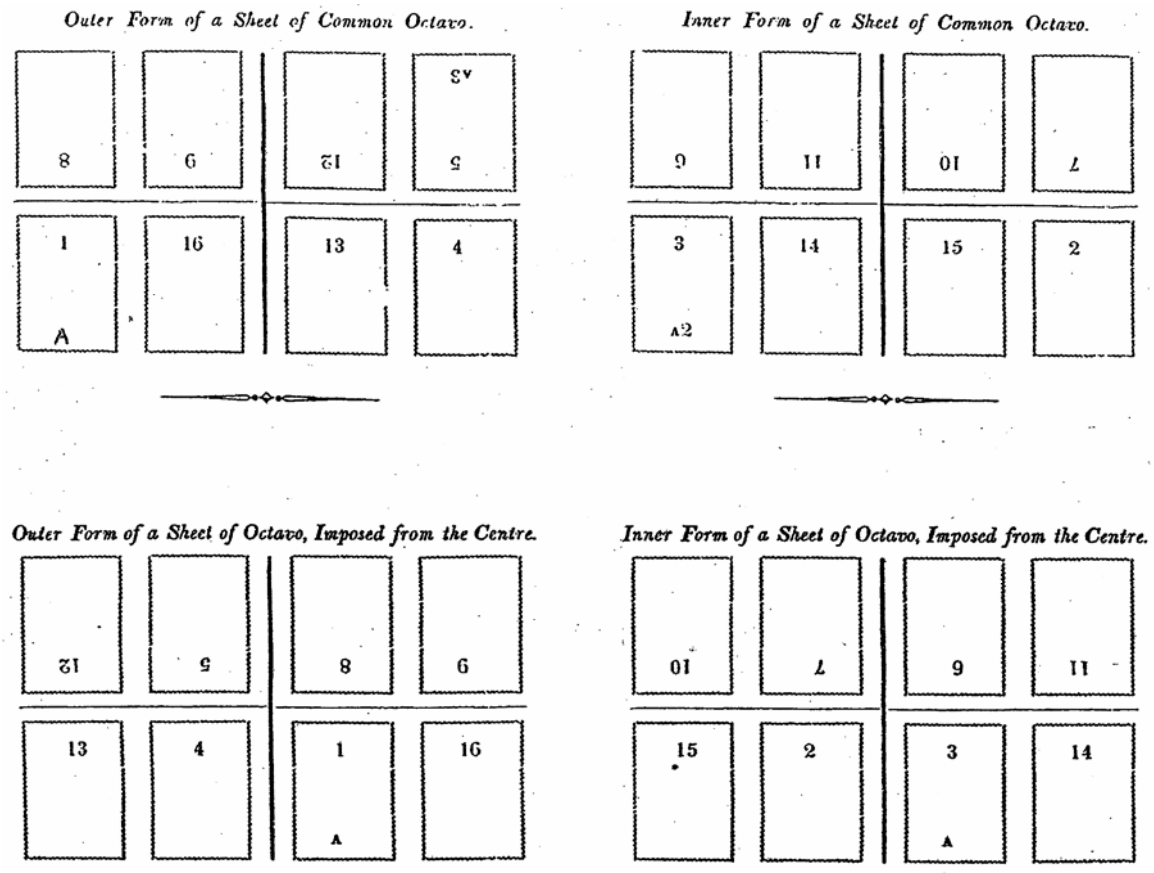

Fig. 7.8. Common and inverted octavo impositions

contain indentations on the fore edges of leaves one and four. An additional detail of *The Countess* reveals that a further calculation must be made to learn the original sheet size and thus, the minimum cost of press used. A single point hole on the bottom of leaf seven of the first gathering, and a pair of point holes on the bottom of leaves three and four of the remaining gatherings corroborate that inverted and common octavo schemes formed the building blocks of a larger sheet.

The Adams power press included retractable points upon which a feeder placed sheets for printing the first side. After printing the first side, the sheets were flipped over, and the sheet placed on the points using the same holes. Grippers traveled up from the bed to capture and remove the sheet exactly as the points retracted, then held the paper

under the tympan in a position precisely reverse to that of the first-printed side. The inked form lifted up against the paper, perfecting the sheet. Through this method, the press guaranteed perfect registration.

Point holes like those of *The Countess* are consistent with an octavo imposition printed as sixteen leaves on the form – otherwise known as an octavo printed in sixteens, or a sextodecimo format. Imposition as a doubled octavo required either two sets of plates for each page or matching pairs of gatherings for printing on the same sheet. The former is unlikely because publishers only purchased two sets of plates when printing a very large edition using a work-and-turn imposition, or planning concurrent printing on separate presses.

While four of the gatherings certainly were imposed as common octavo, only one of the remaining two gatherings bears proof of being imposed from the center, inverted style. To most efficiently use paper, reduce stereotyping costs, and keep labor to a minimum, the likely pairings for printing in sextodecimo would have been:

Gatherings 1 and 4: inverted octavo imposition
Gatherings 2 and 3: common octavo imposition
Gatherings 5 and 6: common octavo imposition

Yet one more calculation must be made. Gripper marks on the fore edges are consistent with *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. To grip on the fore edge with octavo imposition requires pulling an eightmo format narrow side of the sheet first through the press. Gripping on the fore edge of sextodecimo requires a change of press orientation, with the wide dimension leading, and the sheets torn in half after printing.

The original sheet size can be determined to have been, at most, 24" x 38-1/2", or more likely the common sheet size of 24" x 38". The gripper placement requires that the

sheet be fed in the 38" wide side for a 40" wide platen. This configuration is consistent with the mid-level size of Adams power press used to print Berry & Wright's *Life in Boston*. Although no publisher records have been found to prove that the two publications were printed on the same press, the coincidence of their press sizes confirms that the two publications were printed using a similar technological level. Thus, gripper examination forms a reliable method for identifying production on an Adams power press and for associating a publisher's production network with the most-used book press of the era.

Decline of the Adams Press

Striking a balance between speed and quality, the Adams design proved popular through the 1870s, forcing Hoe to acquire the company's patents in the late 1850s and to carry updated models through the 1880s. Hoe produced more than 1,000 such presses, spanning 57 sizes and roller configurations, before discontinuing the design.[81] In the end, it was publisher preference for a book format that took advantage of women's cheap bindery labor that doomed the Adams design, not technological inefficiency. Although Hoe & Co. made improvements to the design and the machine remained quite capable of serving the needs of printers for quality production, equipment makers turned away from investments in the production and marketing of the machine.

The decline of the Adams design echoes that of a predecessor. Treadwell's press fell out of favor several decades earlier in part because its 18" x 23" maximum sheet size proved inadequate for publisher purposes, according to Ralph Green.[82] Most Adams power press owners purchased the 26" x 40" platen, which closely matched the 24" x 38"

[81] Comparato, *Chronicles*, 364. Comparato's count of press sizes is greater than the fifty-four identified in a relatively late Hoe's catalog, *R. Hoe & Co., Manufacturers of Type*.
[82] Green, "Early American Power Printing Presses," 143-153, esp. 148.

double medium sheets most available through paper suppliers at mid-century and after the Civil War. Book publishers preferred formats that achieved leaves with a 3:2 length-to-width proportion, although a slightly greater width became desirable.

"Some publishers prefer a shape in which the length of the leaf is a trifle less; but in no case is the length made to exceed one-half more than the width," stipulated Theodore De Vinne in 1871 after consulting with numerous industry members. Octavo imposition producing 6" x 9-1/4" leaves thus became less fashionable. "The most popular sizes of Books are the Twelve-mo and the Sixteen-mo," he added, with leaf sizes best manufactured from 23" x 41" and 27" x 36" sheets, respectively. What paper manufacturers, attempting to create the largest sheets with the least waste in pulp and machine capacity, provided did not immediately meet the needs of publishers. De Vinne noted the discrepancy between supply and demand:

> The sizes and weights of book papers are variable, and preference for qualities is capricious. The paper-dealers never keep in stock an assortment of varied weights and qualities of any other size than 24 x 38 inches. The size 23 x 41 inches is not uncommon, but it is to be had of few weights. The size 27 x 36 inches is rarely found.[83]

As a result, book publishers more frequently began ordering precise sizes in greater quantities from paper mills. Printers who had purchased from the 26" x 40" Adams design found their presses too short to print twelvemos and too narrow to accommodate sixteenmos with the wider.

Even more devastating to printers was the prospect that the preferred leaf sizes would be printed on larger paper, with bindery workers laboring more intensely to adjust materials to meet expectations. The impositions and sheet sizes that could be accommodated by the Adams power press heavily influenced the production costs of a

[83] De Vinne, *Printer's Price List*, 351.

book and the profitability of the machines that a printer owned, wrote one nineteenth-century commentator:

> It is possible that they would have had a longer lease of life if competition among publishers had not developed the fact that it is better to print a 12mo as a 16mo than on its own paper. The regular size for 12mo was 23 by 41, but, by adding another row of pages, paper 30 by 41 could be worked. One-fourth of the presswork could thus be saved, and the folding and sewing would be cheaper and more expeditious.[84]

The labor savings were particularly acute when adjusting a twelvemo into a sixteenmo. The former required tearing away the strip of the top four leaves, folding that paper twice, and collating those pages with the remaining number, which was tri-folded. A slightly larger press allowed bindery workers to use the simpler sixteenmo format and, often, to incorporate an efficient work-and-turn imposition into the printing.

Women who hand folded printed sheets into gatherings received scarcely more pay for working on larger sheets than smaller ones, despite the greater difficulty of folding thicker gatherings. Publishers thus preferred that printers use cylinder presses that could accommodate sheet sizes greater than those that could be printed on a bed-and-platen design. Publishers profited because women's piece-rate bindery wages in America proved remarkably resistant to change throughout the nineteenth century, which in turn made larger press sheets more economical for book production.[85]

Women's low bindery wages also subsidized the costs of cylinder presses that could accommodate outsized paper and paper on rolls. The availability of cheap electrotyped plates in the 1870s further reduced the worth of Adams power presses. Their

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[84] Pasko, *American Dictionary of Printing*, 9.

[85] "Bookbinding for Printers," *The Inland Printer* 24 (1899): 362-364, esp. 362. A woman could make 10,000 folds in a day, according to that writer's estimate. Increasing the format from sextodecimo added additional savings. Four folds were required per sextodecimo gathering and five folds for a gathering with twice as many pages.

gentle, plate-saving movement was no longer needed to conserve an investment in stereotyped matter. The increase in paper machine dimensions that accompanied capitalization and the gradual shift to Fourdrinier machines made larger sizes of paper available as the century advanced. Having invested in machines that could not compete for the work of major publishing firms and facing economic uncertainty, during the mid-1870s owners of Adams power presses began selling their equipment for scrap metal. At the same time that American papermakers ratcheting up their long-term investment in Fourdriniers rather than cylinder papermaking machines, printers turned toward cylinder presses to replace those of the Adams design, with the practices of each sector reinforcing the other's business strategies. The decline in demand for bed-and-platen presses aided the Hoe Company in shifting its manufacturing strategy completely to Hoe-designed cylinder equipment. By the early twentieth century, the Adams power press had become a working pressroom relic, selectively used for printing from type or plates that might be damaged on newer presses. No presses of that design are known to exist.

Life in Boston and *The Countess* present intricate examples of how gripper analysis can be used to study nineteenth-century American production processes and to link gripper marks to the Adams power press. Yet the question remains: Did publishers of indecent books and newspapers, such as William Berry, follow the gendered divisions of labor implied by their use of the Adams power press? While the advertising iconography surrounding the press and the Boston union's resolution about women's wages disclose women's entry into formerly male print work, other factors fail to prove that Berry's production network used female labor on an Adams power press.

The transience of Berry's business and residential locations could be a sign of an unstable business, but it could just as well have indicated the necessity for operating a step ahead of police or community pressure against his operations. The relatively small size of Berry's firms militates against work specialization that differentiated pressmen from operators. The likelihood that male printers exchanged their skills and time for partnership also makes it less likely that female feeding operators played a role as press feeders or printers in his production network.

Artifacts are primary records in need of scrutiny and careful interpretation, and publications bearing gripper marks are evidence of a printer's position along the developmental trajectory of the Adams power press. The indentations made by the Adams gripper mechanism are among the few bits of evidence left by publishers whose business records have not survived. The study of indecent books as artifacts can focus attention on how production systems are shaped by the social values surrounding their design and use. Berry and other publishers can be studied through the identification of production marks on their publications, the gendered labor patterns associated with their technologies, and more readily available information about their operations. This interdisciplinary approach can encourage historians to reevaluate the role of technological practices and gendered divisions of labor that supported the nineteenth-century American trade in semi-erotic and obscene literature. The technological levels of mainstream publishers, as well as those who operated clandestinely, can be understood better through the information gathered in this manner.

Tracing William Berry's activities opens the way for studying other publishers, from William White and Luther Colby and their spiritualist publications, to those offering

a large number of explicit fiction titles through New York erotica networks. A trail of typographical evidence indicates that his publications appeared frequently listed in advertisements linked to New York vendors. By the late 1850s, Berry's operations became submerged within a prospering clandestine publishing industry. An early manager of George Thompson, the most prolific author of American erotica of the mid-nineteenth century, Berry suffered financially while Thompson made the transition to New York's publishing industry and became a part of ventures with wider national distributions. Berry lost his own gambit to emerge as a publisher along a Boston-to-New York axis, and, as the next chapter shows, other firms absorbed his stock. Artifacts and their evidence, combined with more traditional sources such as publisher advertisements, public directories, and imprint information, help to uncover regional markets for erotica that began in the 1840s, decades before Anthony Comstock's moral reform efforts commenced. William Berry represents the proverbial tip of the iceberg in the erotic books available in the United States midway through the nineteenth-century.

Chapter Eight

Networks of Erotica

> The quantity of these semi-erotic publications is very great.… They were printed in large editions, and were sold openly, many of them being duly "entered according to Act of Congress," but have now become scarce. Although many of them are advertised as "illustrated," they usually have in reality nothing more than a rough wood-cut as frontispiece, or on the outer wrapper.
>
> — Henry Spencer Ashbee (1885)[1]

William Berry attempted to build a small empire from a home base in Boston, becoming a prominent vendor of publications woven into and clustering around those sold as sensational fiction and sporting erotica in the decades before and after the Civil War. Berry most certainly followed the practices in Ashbee's description of the deluge of cheap, semi-erotic books in the United States during the years before the Civil War and just afterward. In the opening years of his publishing career, he took advantage of legal protections offered to encourage domestic authorship. Intense competition among publishers encouraged entrepreneurs to invest in technologies that allowed flexible marketing strategies, lower stock inventories, and portable operations.

Berry's business endeavors provide a trail among small publishers that ultimately leads to Frederic A. Brady and Jeremiah H. Farrell, both of whom advertised titles sold by Berry years after the Boston publisher appears to have ceased offering novels. Entrepreneurs such as William Haynes stayed in the background, but those more visible, such as William Berry, link the necessarily public aspects of connecting books to commercial markets with the often clandestine nature of their ventures.

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[1] Henry Spencer Ashbee, *Centuria Librorum Absconditorum* (1879; reprint, New York: Documentary Books, 1962), 233.

Aided by plentiful cheap paper, stereotyping, and production typically on an Adams power press, William Berry became a national supplier of semi-erotic publications. His books were part of the plentiful, scandalous reading matter that flooded the American marketplace at mid-century and that remained available as reprints through the 1870s and 1880s. Largely titillating rather than explicit, semi-erotic novels offered a well-trod pathway into crime and licentiousness, according to Anthony Comstock. Unruly and unprofitable reading did not lead ineluctably to the immoral actions Comstock decried, but the semi-erotic books that Berry published can, indeed, be tied to expansive networks of erotica and especially to an active trade in New York City.

William Berry began his career dutifully filing for copyright on the books of George Thompson and other authors he sought to publish, and in most cases he deposited copies of early works to complete his claims. Copyright over George Thompson works under several of the pseudonyms for that author helped sustain Berry's strategy of selling directly to readers and through agent representatives. The reach of Berry's books and periodicals stretched beyond Boston and, through New York, outside of New England.

As Berry's star faded in the early 1850s, Thompson asserted his ability to select which firms would handle his novels. A series of publishers seem to have acquired older texts and, in some cases, Berry's printing materials. Reconstructing William Berry's business patterns offers an entry point into the world of commercialized erotic print dominated by George Ackerman, Jeremiah H. Farrell, and the most long-lived of those who sold indecent books in America, the elusive William Haynes.

Berry's publications became part of a nationwide publishing system that exchanged and pirated titles. Some evidence exists that regional tastes distinguished

Philadelphia from Boston in the 1840s before New York publishers came to dominate the trade in sporting press books and publications. Berry's prominence diminished after an unsuccessful foray into competition with New York publishers, but he reemerged as a more public figure in 1857, publishing spiritualist literature. Connections among his partners included joint ventures publishing titles considered indecent by Ashbee, chiefly spiritualist publications that discredited Christian beliefs. Publishers of other works noted by Ashbee ranged from specializing in a genre to those offering general reading materials with occasional profitable clandestine titles for sale. Berry's strategy proved to be one of multiple avenues followed by publishers of indecent books, although his practices proved to be quite similar to those of lesser-studied, second-tier entrepreneurs in the trade.

Increasing police pressure against the public display and sale of sexually-oriented publications encouraged publishers to shift operations outside of their locales. Rather than forcing publishers to cast aside the sale of their objectionable volumes, pressures against selling material locally induced vendors to project their goods into the fast-growing national market for print. Ironically, efforts to protect communities from obscene nuisances, in conjunction with transportation systems that allowed easy inter-city transit, worked to make racy and obscene material even more widely available nationally.

Postal networks played a key role in Berry's marketing strategy. Other publishers, such as William Haynes, relied upon private express companies in much the same way as more prominent members of the book trade, however. The overlap of Berry's operations primarily with that of New York publishing circles provides clues to the evolving practices of the erotica producers whom Anthony Comstock attempted to destroy. Many of Berry's publications found their way into the publishing lists associated with the most

active vendors of indecent books. Following the trail of titles and advertisements related to William Berry reveals his reliance, as a publisher, upon many outlets to connect with customers and to sustain sales.

Stereotyping offers the strongest proof of business networks among publishers, especially among those who operated clandestinely. The importance of stereotyping can be established even for publishers like William Haynes, for whom no surviving imprints are known. American publishers tended to lock texts and images into near-permanent relationships through stereotyping. The reprinting of plated matter ensured the persistence of clues linking publishers between cities and across decades. The recurrence of type over the printing of a text helps to document multiple approaches to the production of semi-erotic and obscene books. Both artifacts and descriptions of publisher operations corroborate the importance of plates in making indecent books profitable.

An identifiable style emerged in Berry's publications, primarily because of his investment in duplicating plates. As the books that he offered became part of larger publishing networks, many of the choices that Berry made influenced the options available to other publishers. The material forms in which readers encountered specific racy titles persisted. Information about his business strategies and technological practices can be gathered, especially from publisher advertisements. Against such bibliographical data, historians can compare the sparse details available about more explicit books and better known publishers, such as William Haynes and Jeremiah H. Farrell.

Publishers balanced their need to reach large audiences against intensifying legal pressures, resulting in maze-like pathways between distributors and producers. Many vendors continued to hawk their wares despite mounting legal pressures in the 1850s and

1860s against distributing obscene literature. Production circles related to Ackerman, Haynes, and Farrell comprised the core of the wholesale trade in the 1860s and early 1870s, with varying levels of secrecy attached to their operations.

The major providers that Comstock first prosecuted were, like Berry, by no means the only suppliers of indecent books in the country. William Berry's publications merged most noticeably into those offered by George Ackerman, one of a handful of major erotica entrepreneurs targeted by Anthony Comstock for special attention during the early 1870s in New York. Berry's ventures also can be tied to Frederic A. Brady and Jeremiah H. Farrell from the 1850s through the early 1870s. Advertisements and physical details aid in tracking the evolution of publisher lists and the methods for distributing books promoted by networks of dealers. Publisher ads recruited distributors and conveyed messages to potential purchasers. Bound with books as wrappers or internal pages printed alongside text, they reveal a vendor's material resources and attempts to make contact with readers. Through type similarities, advertisements hint at the business associations among publishers and booksellers.

Stereotyping sustained those connections over time, preserving the relationship of text to production strategy. Plates became a medium of exchange controlled chiefly by publishers, making texts into commodities, conveying ownership, and making printing materials themselves into reproducible matter. Numerous production marks can establish details of a publisher's operations, but type damage and textual variations across printings provide the most straight-forward evidence of publication networks.

Many of Berry's publications appear to have been an entry point for readers into the world of erotica. The titles he sold in the 1840s and 1850s can be identified as part of

a multi-faceted body of texts considered informative, entertaining, indecent, and/or symbols of an eroticized lifestyle. The sensational novels he put on the market were, in fact, semi-erotic. Through the advertising and publishing networks associated closely with Berry's books, his publications merged with the realm of sexually explicit fiction.

Berry's sensational fiction books generally appear to have been composed as two-column texts with letterpress illustrations printed within the text block, often including six gatherings to form ninety-six pages. Unlike standard numbering, which counted the unnumbered title page leaf as two pages, Berry's books were paged as one hundred, with folio frontispieces also tallied. Printed to face one another, the folio frontispieces saved money by reducing the cutting and insertions needed to offer two illustrations. This style of numbering carried over to the George Thompson books published by others, although New York publishers tended to compose text in a single column and, in the late 1850s, increasingly without signing.

Certain Berry books imposed octavo included two to six leaves of another work printed along with the text block, rather than being printed separately, inserted, and bound. These advance copies filled out signatures on press, which otherwise would have been printed with blank pages or as half gatherings. Publishers offered up to three-and-a-half chapters of a novel, usually promoting a work in press.

Berry saved money by printing the illustrations within the body of the book along with text, rather than separately. After printed sheets were folded into gatherings, they were stabbed for three-hole sewing just to the side of the spine, threaded, and bound with colored or plain wrappers glued to the spine. Usually lightly calendared and occasionally thick but light, the cheap paper often contained a higher proportion of shives than other

mid-century books. The golden or light brown appearance of the specks resembles straw or a light-colored wood. Dyed papers for wrappers,, or occasionally as frontispieces, include the most numerous shives, with green dyes resisting bonding of pigments to the non-rag fibers, resulting in a slight granite-like appearance for wrappers of that color.

Like many cheap publications popular especially in the 1850s through 1870s, pages in books composed octavo measured about 6″ x 9″, usually with gatherings roughly ploughed open rather than neatly trimmed by scissors or another cutting device. The unfinished state of the book at its sale reflects a lack of permanence expected of the reading matter, which would be passed from person to person until the item deteriorated. Without more permanent binding, paper wrappers protected the text from damage for only a short while. Wrappers faded and tore, making the entire book more ephemeral.

The torn leaf edges and gripper marks on many of surviving books give further clues to production. Most were imposed common octavo, with a number of the books also showing signs that printers regularly attempted to protect title pages from excessive inking or perhaps the impression of gripper mechanisms by imposing the first signature as octavo from the center. A smaller number of books, including some more explicit, were imposed as duodecimo, and arranged in such a way that they could be gathered without cutting, thus saving labor. Even books signed as octavo sometimes were actually imposed in duodecimo fashion. Other styles for duodecimo required cutting, producing two gatherings. British binders placed the smaller gathering of four leaves behind the larger gathering of eight leaves, but Americans tended to use imposition that allowed the four leaves to be bound into the center of the eight leaves. Binding without cutting also was popular in America, in part due to the labor it saved.

During the 1850s, 24″ x 38″ became the most common sheet size. Aided by the availability of stereotyped plates that could be readjusted for a larger format without removing the octavo signing cast into them, printers often produced sextodecimo formats with octavo impositions. As the frequency of signing on plates declined after mid-century, printers continued using the same format. A smaller number of books were printed in duodecimo format, producing a smaller size of book.

Berry's style, like that of other publishers of the genre, took advantage of low postal rates while being influenced by them to limit the thickness and weight of a publication. The quality and size of paper selected for octavo-style books numbered for 100 pages with a wrapper weighed between three and four ounces.[2] Based upon the quality and weight of paper from samples in *Appendix A* and in comparison with data from Ticknor and Fields at mid-century, it can be estimated that such a Berry book cost about $60 for a reprint of 1,000 copies, assuming that the first printing bore the cost of composition and stereotyping the plates.

Applying standard wholesale discounts left William Berry with a profit margin of forty percent, from which George Thompson's royalty may have deducted an additional sum, leaving the publisher with a hefty twenty-five percent return on his investment with each fresh printing of 1,000 copies, without deducting for storage costs. The profit on selling books to customers by mail is much more difficult to calculate due to the distance-based formulas. A standard book weighing just less than four ounces might be mailed from New York to inland readers for four cents, a fee included in the publisher's price.

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[2] Staff members of several collections weighed selected items from their holdings, allowing this calculation to be made. Especially helpful were Gayle Cooper, Special Collections Cataloger, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia; Alan Jutzi, Avery Chief Curator, Rare Books, Huntington Library; William H. Loos, Grosvenor Rare Book Room Curator (retired), Buffalo and Erie County Public Library; and the Readers' Services staff of the American Antiquarian Society.

Selling an entire reprinting of 1,000 books may have garnered $200 in net sales, costing only about $60 to print and roughly $40.00 for postage, not counting mailing supplies.

The total profit on direct sales could have been as high as $100 for reprinted books before calculating royalties. No standard number of copies per edition or reprint existed in nineteenth-century America, and the precise materials for producing a book ranged widely, as this dissertation shows. American manufacturing practices, government policies, and a growing demand for illicit literature combined to allow William Berry and others to quickly make a profit as publishers. The flexibility of Adams power press, experimentation among papermakers, and the custom of stereotyping books contributed to an environment in which publishers addressing the demand of Americans for indecent books prospered.

Stereotyping and Electrotyping

Berry's business operations can be traced in part due to the American practice of stereotyping. Stereotyping helped to ameliorate a long-standing shortage of type that plagued colonial American printers and their successors, well into the nineteenth century. With foreign supplies expensive to purchase and difficult to transport, type was a precious commodity and unusual fonts are easy to trace until the explosion of ornamental designs in the 1830s.[3] Stereotyping preserved an original investment in hand composition

[3] As a point of nomenclature, the words font (or fount), face, and type should be distinguished from one another. John Lane offers useful distinctions in his notes accompanying the revised and enlarged reprinting of Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*,1683-1684, eds., Herbert Davis and Harry Carter (West New York, N.J.: Mark Batty, 2004), new note to page 341 in the 1960 edition. According to Lane, font refers to cast type employed as a set by a printer. North Americans referred to such sets as a font, although English printers preferred the word fount, which derived from the metal casting necessary to the manufacture of type. In hand casting, a set of matrices were employed to produce a set of type materials in a single size. Casting machines, such as Bruce's, extended the possible sets of type and further complicated the concept of "font." Founders simply pulled together the appropriate number of

and extended the ability of a plate's owner to control reproduction of intellectual work. The exchange of plates served to reinforce customs of trade respecting copyright, despite the ease of resetting and stereotyping material for unauthorized printing.

Hand composition emphasized the importance of individual pieces of type to printing, with the limits of skill and supply becoming a bottleneck as press speeds increased in the opening decades of the century. Compositors selected type from a case with compartments to hold the letters, symbols, ligatures, and spacing units in a font, and the arranged them to read upside-down and backwards in a composing stick.

With each line of type, the compositor added a thin strip of lead of a specified thickness to separate the previously worked matter from that to be added. As the stick filled with type, the compositor transferred groups of lines to a galley, eventually assembling separate pages to be printed. Tied together securely with string, the galley awaited proofing and correction. Set type might be used immediately for small jobs, requiring only that the galley be transferred to the form, tightly locked in place, and imposed correctly. After inking and printing, the form would be cleaned and unlocked, and each piece of type redistributed back to the job case. Reprinting a job required printers either to keep large amounts of type standing in tied bundles or locked up in forms, ready to be reimposed but unavailable for immediate printing jobs.

Allowing type to remain standing between infrequent printings of a publication reduced the number of other jobs that could be set and printed. Heavy, locked up forms

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letters from stock rather than specifically producing type for a customer. Sets of printing matter used together habitually by a specific printing shop may also be considered a font. The actual printing surface of a letter is called a face. Face and typeface have come to embrace the design and similarities of letter forms to one another, whereas font remains a reference to the physical artifact for many typographers. The most general term, type, historically has been used more generally to cover all cast designs applied to the printing process, whether letters or ornaments. The distinction between physical form and concept tends to hold even in the early twenty-first century, although modern type designers have adopted the appellation "font" for what are, in fact, designs, due to the cachet of the historic term.

could not be moved easily, and they required storage space that was rare in the typical printing office. The shortage of type encouraged American publishers to stereotype books much more frequently than their British counterparts. Stereotyping substituted lighter plates for cumbersome pages of type or locked forms. Especially with cheap printing paper, stereotyping proved worthwhile. Replaceable plates rather than more expensive type suffered wear through recurring impressions on rough or uneven substrates.

Foundry workers could create an exact duplicate of the type, however. By 1830, techniques for making plaster or *papier-mâché* mold from the set type had become well known in England and on the Continent, as well as in the United States. Workers placed the mold within a frame that could be submerged in a mixture of molten lead, antimony, and tin to fill the matrix with metal, with overage pouring out the sides of the mold as the frame emerged from vat. When the metal had cooled, workers broke off the plaster, cleaned the type, and planed the back of the plates so that images would print.

Stereotyping cost between one-quarter and one-half of setting type by hand, depending on the complexity of the material. Complicated layouts or foreign language fonts increased the labor of composition, making stereotyping even more worthwhile in order to save future effort at reconstructing pages of type. Generally, deciding to print a book more than once justified making plates for the second issue. On the other hand, making plates increased the initial investment. Although small corrections could be made by boring a hole in the plate and inserting a plug with the correct letters, significant changes necessitated resetting and replating entire pages.[4]

[4] Thomas F. Adams, *Typographia: A Brief Sketch of the Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Typographic Art; with Practical Directions for Conducting Every Department in an Office* (Philadelphia: Printed and Published by the Compiler, 1837), 349-353; held at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Printers in the United States and England generally held different opinions about the value of stereotyping. Plating released type for other jobs, reduced the wear to a font from long press runs, and eliminated the need for proofreading reset matter. It locked in a final version of the text, made materials more portable, and allowed a publisher to balance the cost of printing and storing a large edition against the lower-risk strategy of producing books only as demand proved clear. Americans readily accepted the technique and developed slotted wooden storage boxes for plates, making materials for whole books easily transportable.[5]

By contrast, British printers simply laid the plates horizontally on shelving, requiring far more space. The English shop-centered storage technique encouraged printers to treat plates as stationary objects rather than portable, interchangeable units. Plating failed to fit into English printing practices in others ways, as well. English publishers argued that stereotyping might reduce the value of an edition by making it indistinguishable from later printings. Additionally, printers might strike off additional copies and thus cheat the plate's owners out of profits. Stereotyped books would have to be printed frequently and with few corrections in order to justify the initial cost. Such a strategy worked to lower the price that publishers could demand for their wares.[6]

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[5] Boxes for storing stereotype plates must have been extremely common in the shops of nineteenth-century American printers but are now rare, even in special collections focusing on the history of printing artifacts. Anthony Bliss, curator of Rare Books and Literary Manuscripts at the Bancroft Library of the University of California-Berkeley, first showed this author such wooden boxes. University of California-Berkeley holds two boxes containing most of the plates required for printing Robert Woltor's *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the year A.D. 1899, by Robert Woltor, a Survivor* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1882). The survival of this critical evidence of distinctive American printing practices probably resulted from the subject matter of the book. Plates and two boxes accompany printed duodecimo sheets for a nineteenth-century anti-Chinese novel printed in California, preserved in part because of the fantastic nature of the novel, its local interest, and the value as a printing history artifact (uncataloged Box 962.12). Boxes of stereotyped plates have been acquired recently by Rare Book School, University of Virginia, and are regularly displayed in museum activities associated with school courses. Princeton University also reportedly owns similar boxes.

[6] Adams, *Typographia* (1837), 353-362.

The English book trades suffered from no shortage of type, and long customs of ensuring continued work for laborers upon additional printing proved difficult for managers to dislodge. Customers expected crisp, clear impressions, and established publishing houses took advantage of preferences for smaller supplies of higher quality books to retain their profits. In a domestic market less competitive than that of the United States, English printers and publishers had less incentive to turn to a technology that could dislodge long-standing trade customs.

The popularity of cylinder presses in England during the 1830s and 1840s caused difficulties for publishers who wished to stereotype their books. The greater pressure applied by cylinder machines injured plates, forcing printers to use the much slower Stanhope iron press in order to avoid damage but costing more per printed sheet than volume production.[7] In contrast, the Adams power press allowed American printers to realize the benefits of stereotyping and mechanized printing at the same time. The shortage of type and the availability of the Adams power press fostered a willingness by Americans to invest in stereotyping, resulting in printing practices that differed from those of English printers. Plates allowed American publishers to print books in small batches as needed rather than risking capital for a single large run, with printed sheets being stored until a book had sold completely. Publishers transported and bartered plates

[7] The English inventor Charles Mahon, Third Earl of Stanhope, designed the iron press bearing his name in order to resolve the difficulty of insufficient pressure produced by wooden presses. Starting about 1800, he also spent much effort to develop stereotyping as a useful art. See George A. Kubler, *The Era of Charles Mahon, Third Earl of Stanhope, Stereotyper: 1750-1825* (New York: George A. Kubler, 1938). Although invented in France during the eighteenth century, stereotyping took considerable refinement before techniques could be perfected to create duplicates of fine type details. A number of documents regarding that process of development are in George A. Kubler, *Historical Treatises, Abstracts & Papers on Stereotyping* (New York: George Kubler, 1936). Kubler has translated original French and Dutch writings into English.

across the country as part of selling copyright to a previously printed work. By the 1840s, stereotyping had become a common practice among American book publishers.[8]

During that decade, American printers began expanding their duplication techniques through electrotyping. Workers pressed type into wax to create a mold, then brushed the wax with graphite to enhance the ability of the surface to conduct electricity. Upon placing both the mold and the copper into a galvanic bath, the metal migrated to the graphite, forming a thin copper matrix. After a sufficient thickness had been obtained, laborers peeled off the metal shell and backed the copper with a composite metal to solidify the mold.[9]

Electrotypes conveyed the fine details of wood engravings with more fidelity and could be manufactured more cheaply than stereotypes. Harper and Brothers led the way to electrotyping in 1841, encouraging the use of the new process for wood engravings.[10] Whether stereotyped or electrotyped, plates came into frequent use by the 1840s and often were known simply as stereotypes, due in part to the difficulty of telling apart products printed by the two processes.[11]

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[8] Michael Winship, "Printing from Plates in the Nineteenth Century United States," *Printing History* 5, no. 2 (1983): 15-26.

[9] Several methods existed for injecting or pouring hot metal into the mold, but the submersion method is among the most frequently noted in technical literature. A papier-mache mold is also called a "flong." Stereotying practices are described in numerous printing manuals of the day, as well as in more specialized works such as George A. Kubler, *A New History of Stereotyping* (New York: George A. Kubler, 1941), 58-82; and Charles V. Walker, *Electrotype Manipulation. Bing the Theory and Plain Instructions in the Art of Working in Metals, by Precipitating Them from Their Solutions, Through the Agency of Galvanic or Voltaic Electricity. Also In the Arts of Electro-Plating, Electro-Gilding, and Electro-Etching; with an Account of the Mode of Depositing Metallic Oxides, and of the Several Applications of Electrotype in the Arts* (Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird, 1852), Section 32. "Wax Moulds."

[10] James M. Wells, "Book Typography in the United States of America," in ed. Kenneth Day, *Book Typography 1815-1965: In Europe and the United States of America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, 333. Day's book originally was published as *Anderhalve Eeuw Boektypografie 1815-1965* (Netherlands: NV Drukkerij G.J. Thieme, 1965).

[11] In this dissertation, the description of an electrotype has been used only when characteristics of that technique can be detected. The two methods are virtually impossible to distinguish from printed results. For the relationship of wood engraving techniques to plate making, see Jane R. Pomeroy, "On the Changes Made in Wood Engravings in the Stereotyping Process," *Printing History* 17, no. 2 (1995): 35-40.

Copyright

The possession of stereotyped plates in America acknowledged – or at least strongly implied – permission to use copyrighted text. Publishers who paid for stereotyping literally owned an intellectual work, bolstering a publisher's position against members of the emerging profession of authors.[12] Authors unwilling or unable to pay for publishing their own texts provided manuscripts to publishers in hopes of recovering fees through outright payment for a work or royalties upon book sales. The arrangement allowed publishers to file for copyright and severely limited the influence of authors over the production process.

The structure of copyright laws required production of an artifact and public announcement of the venture as proof of intent to publish. For a century after the first national copyright law in 1790, American protection covered only citizens or residents who filed a proposed title page, advertised the work in a newspaper, and deposited the finished book with the copyright office. Additional stipulations such as the existence and type of notice, location of filing, and number of copies to be deposited changed throughout the nineteenth century, but the material production and citizenship requirements remained until the United States became signatory to the Berne Convention's International Copyright Agreement in 1891.[13]

Publishers, rather than authors, typically filed for copyright, due in part to these stipulations. A small number of authors financially supported the production of their works by underwriting the printing costs for ventures deemed too commercially risky by

[12] Winship, "Printing from Plates."
[13] R.R. Bowker, *Copyright: Its History and Its Law* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1912) and James Barnes, *Authors, Publishers, and Politicians: The Quest for an Anglo-American Copyright Agreement, 1815-1854* (London: Routledge, 1974) are key sources of information about debates over copyright in nineteenth-century America.

established publishers. Lacking a relationship to networks of booksellers, authors who printed their own writings found distribution to be a problem. Manuscripts accepted for publication might earn royalties of ten to fifteen percent of the profits from sold copies, but this amounted to little unless a book sold well. Few authors hazarded the risks of underwriting their own publications or the complications of negotiating such arrangements; accepting an upfront fee or royalties proved simpler.[14]

Exceptionally valued authors might receive an advance on royalties, but publishers required authors to wait until a book's costs had been recovered before any sale fees were paid. Some authors agreed to a single payment in exchange for transferring copyright options to a publisher, thus avoiding the tedious accounting disputes that inevitably arose from a publisher's calculations of a book's cost and actual sales.

Costs were hard to calculate. Materials and labor comprised only a portion of the outlay necessary for book publishing. Overhead, such as staff wages, shipping, and waste also had to be included. Figuring credits for returned books, resolving problems with uncollected debts from wholesale dealers, and fulfilling royalty obligations to authors presented complex accounting difficulties for publishers attempting to do business through other vendors. The most lasting method for exercising control over an intellectual work came from ownership of plates. Once paid for, plates could be rented to

[14] The question of whether to purchase plates and to finance publication or to accept royalties plagued nineteenth-century authors, with the anticipated market for a work shaping an author's decision. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* became a best seller, causing Stowe to regret accepting her husband's advice to accept the standard royalty. While generous in comparison to the average arrangement, Stowe's fee failed to compensate her in a manner proportionate to the wild success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. See Michael Winship, " 'The Greatest Book of its Kind': A Publishing History of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 109, part 2 (1999): 309-332. In contrast, poets more frequently asserted control over publication, in part due to the reluctance of publishers to plate poetry, which rarely made a profit. Walt Whitman notably repackaged *Leaves of Grass* through revisions, additions, and new printings, aided by his personal control over the plates for that title.

other firms for a flat fee or leased by the number of books printed. Stereotyping thus helped to eliminate some of the accounting problems that publishers faced.

Given the dominant practices of the day, it is not surprising that William Berry, his partnerships, and other firms copyrighted and stereotyped a number of books, including those considered semi-erotic in their day. Trade customs that made stereotyped plates a symbol of copyright encouraged the use of machinery that protected that physical investment, and smaller shops especially could employ the Adams power press on medium-sized newspapers as well as books.

Courtesy of the trade provided an informal mechanism for supporting the role of stereotyped plates as embodiments of permission to print. Publishers often declined to publish a work first brought out by another firm as part of the custom. In theory, courtesy of the trade required publishers to respect a competitor's relationship with an author and prior material investment in a title. During periods of intense competition, rival editions of a popular author reduced the ability of a publisher to recover costs. When cheaper books flooded the market, sometimes within days of the release of an authorized edition, the firm that honored its royalty agreement with an author stood to lose profits and market share.

Firms paying royalties to English or French authors often faced competition from American firms that rapidly reproduced entire books in low-cost editions. Rigorous copyright stipulations requiring American residency and initial publication made it nearly impossible for popular English or continental authors to ensure legal protection. Translations qualified as new works, allowing the legal reprinting of domestic works for new audiences as well as those imported from abroad.

The extension of trade courtesy never proved to be an absolute, even among publishers with reputations for integrity in their operations, however. Entrepreneurs plying the more cut-throat market for popular fiction were even less likely to leave a profitable genre to competitors. The widespread availability of power presses capable of flexible production and the lack of copyright protection for foreign works contributed to piracy among American publishers. At the same time, texts published by American firms, whether written abroad or at home, became fodder for reprinters.

In the highly competitive market for fiction from the 1840s through the 1880s, however, vendors frequently disregarded courtesy of the trade. William Berry placed more than informal boundaries around his titles by filing for copyright. He relied upon legal protection through copyright chiefly for books written by George Thompson, a rising star of American sensational fiction.

In 1849 and 1850, William Berry filed for copyright on nine books, gaining the rights to material published in eight books written by Thompson under assorted pen names and to one title written by H.L. Rookwood (*Appendix C*). Many of those novels appeared serially in the weekly newspaper, *Life in Boston*, which also published the notices required for each book's copyright filing. Thompson wrote under the name "Greenhorn" for many titles; for others, he became "the Author," "Himself," or "Asmodeus." Berry listed the author of *The Evil Genius* as Paul de Kock, one of the most evocative of George Thompson's *noms de plume*.

Like the moniker Greenhorn, Paul de Kock served as a code for advertising sporting publications. Few of the works advertised as being those of the latter author were in fact from the pen of Charles Paul de Kock, the French sensationalist writer.

However, ascribing French origins to a work indicated that readers could expect spicy content and storylines, and especially those that revealed the debauchery of European aristocracy. William Berry probably welcomed any publicity – and especially notoriety – for his books. Trading in on the foreign-sounding and sexually-associated name of an author brought attention to novels.

Typography

In type design as in the origin of texts, Americans mimicked influences from abroad even while reinterpreting and reshaping imports for domestic purposes. The designs developed for printing intensive reading matter shifted toward a cleaner, modern style more adapted to mechanized printing. At the same time, an explosion of decorative fonts for larger display uses, such as headlines, supported commercial printing and infused novelty into rather conservative book design.

American book publishers followed European trends when selecting modern faces for texts or refined display purposes. Like transitional fonts that moved away from traditional rounded Italian designs, modern type that was developed during the mid-eighteenth century highlighted the contrast between the stems and thin lines of letters. A vertical thrust replaced slightly sloped angles, and flat serifs replaced the brackets that terminated certain corners of letters. However, modern faces quickly became illegible through the rapid printing and greater pressures of mass-production publications.

Designs created for printing books by machine tended toward moderate contrast between the thickness of letter stems and crossbars. Improved presses and smoother, machine-made paper in the early nineteenth century allowed the creation of delicate

typographical features that could not have been printed in earlier times. Yet, at the same time, the increases in press speed and power also worked to obliterate fine details such as hairlines and serifs.[15]

Mass production for commercial purposes lay at odds with craftsmanship. Heavy type or plate use made hairlines wavy, plugged with ink the hollows of letters such as "a" and "e," and knocked off serifs. Modern faces could be stereotyped more successfully and reprinted from plates, which increased the incentive to duplicate type matter. The growth of book consumption encouraged printers to introduce more spacing, or leading, between lines of modern Bodoni book type or to turn to less dramatic Scotch roman fonts for texts. The extreme contrast of Bodoni proved less suitable for mass production printing but adept as a source for display headlines on ephemera and advertising.

The exaggerated characteristics of modern letters inspired so-called fat face and Egyptian fonts while cultivating interest in other bold designs. By the 1830s, a profusion of ornamental fonts reflected intense competition among printers and the role of print as a facilitator of public performance, advertising, and commerce. English foundries led the way in addressing and stimulating the growing diversity of type uses. Fat faces developed at the start of the century encouraged printers to draw attention to specific phrases apart from seamless texts, and were ideal in large wood type for posters and in smaller versions

[15] A.F. Johnson has greatly influenced historians of typography and must be acknowledged as the origin for many of the critical definitions in the field, such as the demarcation of modern type features. In numerous articles and books, he laid down organizational structures making design developments amenable to scholarly study. His work, like that of so many other type historians, weighted book typography much more heavily than that for job printing or other commercial forms. Among his most important works are *Type Designs: Their History and Development*, 2d ed. (London: Grafton & Co., 1959) and *One Hundred Title-Pages: 1500-1800* (London: John Lane, 1928).

for ephemera. The related circus-like ornamentals, often denoted as Tuscan, dominated advertising for entertainment, lotteries, and public events.[16]

Fonts like Clarendon attempted to reconcile serifs, which were used most frequently for texts, with the need for to convey lists of detailed information in a legible but detailed manner. Clarendon provided attractive headings compatible with columns of roman type, allowing readers to make sense of railway timetables or other long galleys printed in small type. Also in the Egyptian family of designs, Antique squared the serifs of Clarendon but preserved other similarities. Sold frequently at street newsstands or railroad book stalls, two-column books with slab serif headlines undoubtedly were a familiar sight in the hands of patrons reading at transportation hubs in American cities. Whether made bold or outlined for emphasis, Antique became one of the most familiar display types in sensational novels, both in America and England.

Americans also added a san serif to the modern fat face Tuscan and Antique designs prevalent in popular literature. A letterform called Gothic in the United States (but Grotesque in Europe) defied conventions about appropriate terminal lines for characters. The above faces persisted for much of the century, despite the attraction of eccentric designs. Lacking the feet that stabilized letters and acknowledged design origins

[16] Nicolete Gray, *Nineteenth Century Ornamented Typefaces* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976) and the essay "Ornamented Types in America," by Ray Nash included therein are superior sources of information about practical type design in that century. Gray's work was originally published as *XIXth Century Ornamented Types & Title Pages* (1938). James M. Wells's essay, "Book Typography in the United States of America," provides a very readable overview of American printing and type developments during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but delves little into design matters of the earlier period. Daniel B. Updike's classic typographical treatise *Printing Types, Their History, Forms, and Use*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937) is a model of the informative, laudatory expository style favored by typographical historians, yet it is less useful than others in exposing the distinctions among the styles and practices common in commercial printing. For identification of type faces, see W.Turner Berry, A.F. Johnson, and W.P. Jaspert, *The Encyclopedia of Type Faces* (London: Blandford Press, 1958) and, with relevant historical addition to identification material, Alexander S. Lawson with Dwight Agner, *Printing Types: An Introduction*, rev. and exp. (1971; Boston: Beacon Press, 1990) .

within the engraving trade, Gothic seemed at once shockingly straightforward and devoid of context.[17]

The combinations of type chosen by Berry confirm the dating of his publications as recorded in copyright records, while placing his production in the context of developing American typography and the popularity of George Thompson. A modern face dominated the neatly arranged title page that Berry deposited for copyright for *The Countess* in the spring of 1849. A single shaded outline font, slightly small for its position but tasteful nevertheless, spiced up the layout. The well-proportioned page stood in contrast to the more frequently garish ornamental and modern font combinations that Berry used in his other publications.

The submitted title page design was not incorporated into surviving versions of the publication, perhaps reflecting a short-term relationship between Berry and a compositor. The book produced by Berry & Wright contained a different layout and an ornamental font called Rustic, both more in tune with his publishing style and capable of being reproduced with the type available for printing *Life in Boston* (fig. 8.1).[18]

The texts of Berry's publications in 1849 were set in bracketed roman fonts, but the following year modern faces dominated the text. The shift allows his publications to be dated roughly. In the later style, Berry supplemented serif text type with various larger display fonts on title pages and for the headline of the book's title printed at the top of the text opening page. Titling fonts, designed specifically to be used in all capital letters on

[17] Nomenclature can be confusing in typography, as in the case of Gothic type. In Europe, that term is an alternate name for the German script black letter. In the United States during the nineteenth century, Gothic described European san serif designs. It is unclear why Americans changed the usage, although the answer might well be the boldness and lack of time-honored (and eye-pleasing) serifs.

[18] *Copyright Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870*, Court of Massachusetts (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held at LOC; George Thompson [The Author, pseud.], *The Countess* (Boston: Berry & Co., 1849 or 1850); held at Yale University. Title page on left: Courtesy, Library of Congress. Title page on right is the microfilm reproduction in Wright's *American Fiction* series I, 2583.

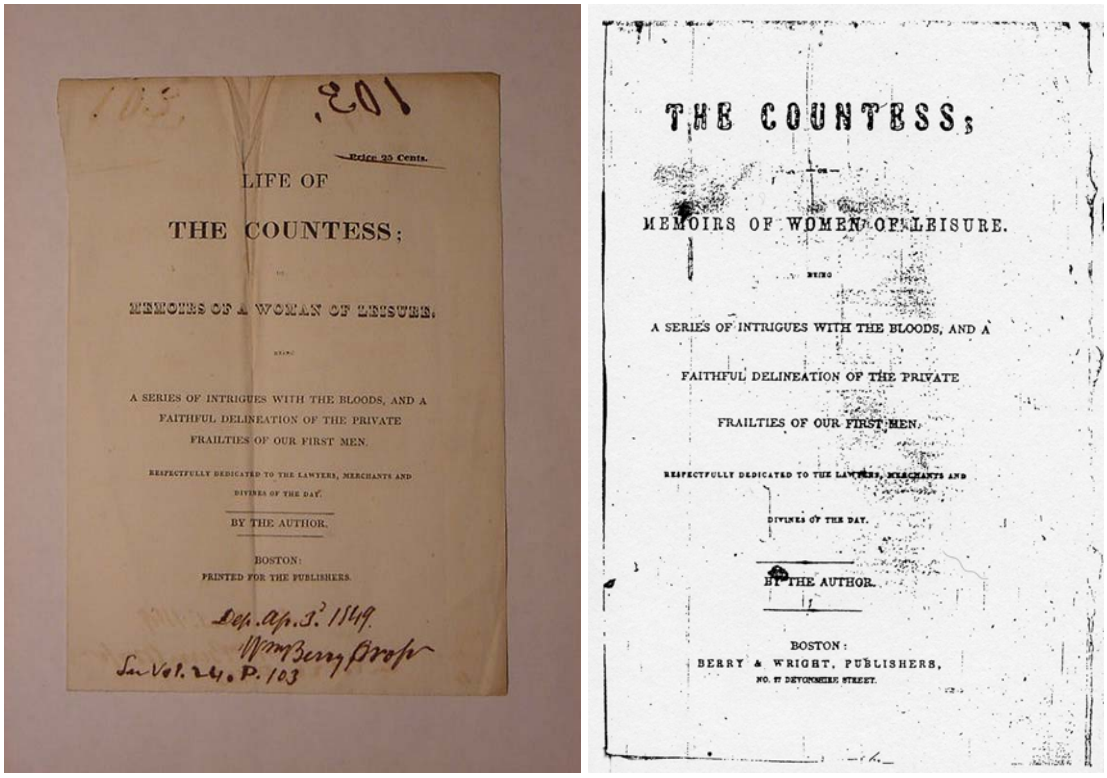

Fig. 8.1 Copyright and published title pages of *The Countess* (1849)

title pages or in other display locations, frequently appeared. Berry apparently acquired the printing materials of Willis Little & Co., boosting the quality and quantity of his type holdings.

Berry took advantage of the availability of varied fonts when his publication *Life in Boston* competed against other Boston story papers that offered cheap fiction, although his resources were considerably less deep than those of Boston's F. Gleason, publisher of *Flag of Our Union*. Publishers attempted to attract the attention of readers through a constantly changing array of lettering. They quickly included new type in publications as fresh designs came on the market.

The rush to use new fonts and similar market approaches created clusters of novelty shared by the two publishers. Like Gleason, Berry promoted his own books in the

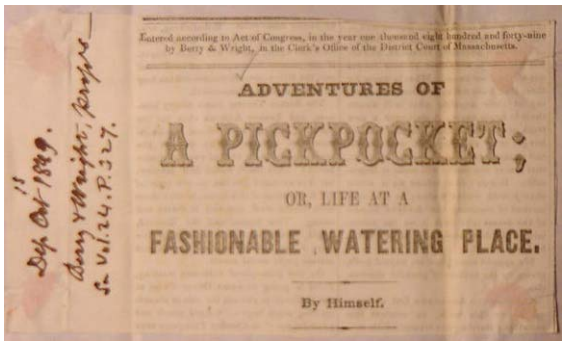

Fig. 8.2 Five-line advertisement in copyright filing (1849)

newspaper he controlled. In many cases, Berry replicated at least one major font from the periodical advertisement in the title pages of the books he printed. Title pages rarely contained the same combination of fonts, but selective replication enhanced continuity between a reader's first knowledge of a book and perusal of its final form.

Title page deposits for both publishers show that they each chose a variety of ornamental fonts to attract reader attention. *Figure 8.2* shows a five-line advertisement that Berry printed in *Life in Boston*. Apparently published as part of the copyright requirement that works be announced in newspapers prior to submission, the clipping rather than a title page was submitted as the filing deposit for *Adventures of a Pickpocket*. The ad, from top to bottom, features each of the most commonly occurring fonts in Berry's publications: slab serif (Antique), ornamental, modern, bold gothic (sanserif), and bold modern. Modern and gothic frequently appeared in condensed versions, as well. Gleason's selection of ornamental fonts far outstripped that of Berry. Berry's printer owned a variety but could not match Gleason's ability to feature fresh designs as new novels were advertised. Most of the Berry advertisements repeated four major designs, with main lines set in an ornamented circus type. Taken together, the ads, title pages, and

text opening headlines usually included the same fonts, indicating that he probably used a single shop for composing his periodicals and books.[19]

Making Foreign Types American

What purported to be foreign could be – and often was – produced in the United States. Type evidence in *The Countess*, one of Berry's earliest copyrighted works, reveals tensions between assertions of republican virtue as a foundation of American character and a simmering American desire for distinction within an egalitarian society. Alterations in the forms in which Berry conveyed information, whether in the novels themselves or in the publisher advertisements accompanying texts, allowed his operations to be clearly identified as American and point to some of his business associations.

A specific font employed by Berry in promoting that book not only engenders the sense of an American spirit in the design, but also ties his firm to printing industry networks outside of Boston. Berry's advertisement for *The Countess* (fig. 8.3) contained a version of Rustic, a design unusual among American publications even after the chaotic typographic offerings of the 1830s and 1840s.[20] Its availability reflected technical innovations in American printing, specifically the ability to reproduce fonts, as well as a desire to impart content through a carefully selected type design.

It is likely that Berry used a pirated font for this printing. The ability of foundries to copy one another's designs by electrotyping matrices and paper shrinkage during

[19] *Copyright Title Pages of the United States*, 1790-1870, Early Copyright Records Collection, LOC. Courtesy, Library of Congress.
[20] For examples of Figgins' two versions of Rustic, cited in this paper as log-style and plank-style Rustic, see Gray, *Nineteenth Century*, 55. Facsimile of advertisement in *Life in Boston, Sporting Chronicle, and Lights and Shadows of New England Morals* 1 (Sept. 1, 1849), Boston Newspapers Collection, AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

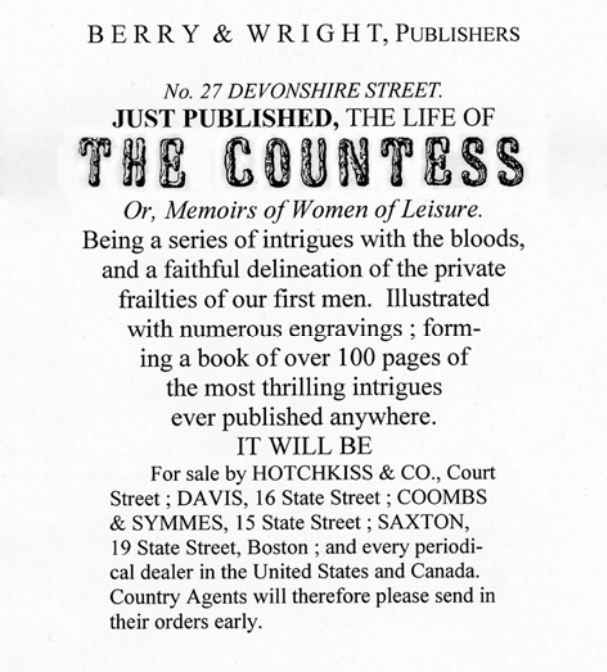

Fig. 8.3. Facsimile of advertisement for *The Countess* (1849)

printing makes it nearly impossible to tell apart legitimately purchased fonts from those copied by domestic foundries. One can conclude that Berry used a bootleg version of Rustic because *The Countess* was printed at the outset of its availability, and because the font is of an exceedingly unusual design, one that he may have decided would not be worth the price if only to be used sparingly. For *Life in Boston's* advertisement in *The Countess,* as well as for the 1849 title page of that book's first publication*,* Berry chose one of the two available versions of Rustic. Rather than the version that created letters out of overlapping logs, he selected the plank-like form with rounded features and wood-grain styling. In surviving Berry publications, that particular font appears only twice.

Through type selection and editing, Berry positioned his publication as an American rendering of the real lives of women on journeys of seduction rather than a text derivative of the familiar tell-all epistle of a European courtesan. The font design he

chose reflects the heroine's truly American lineage, which combines honest aristocracy and republican virtue. Louisa's maternal grandfather had signed the Declaration of Independence, making the young girl, like her mother, "a descendant from a good old stock" of elite Americans. Louisa's mechanic father "was of the bone and sinew of the nation, a noble specimen of old Boss Nature's journey-work; of that class of men to whom our republic owes its existence, and by whose energies, its name is sustained unsullied, and its escutcheon preserved unblotted."[21]

Berry subtitled his book *Memoirs of a Woman of Leisure*. The subtitle associated the book with John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* while implying an Americanization of that erotic British masterpiece. Berry also simplified the copyright title's main line from *Life of The Countess* to *The Countess*, a semantic shift indicating a change in genre. The transition from memoir to fictional biography reflected the presence of multiple subplots barely related to the main heroine's tale.[22]

Louisa's parentage blended aristocracies of political leadership and the artisan class; in the same manner, Berry's mixture of Rustic and modern faces in the published title page signified that colloquial American culture could stand equally with that of Europe in a work of erotic interest. It also distinguished the intended title page, filed for copyright, from the book actually published.

Berry reset the title page, altering the type and, to a lesser extent, the layout from the copy deposited with his copyright application. He failed to deposit the final book to complete his claim but nevertheless published the novel. Perhaps his printer, upon seeing

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[21] George Thompson, *The Countess; or Memoirs of Women of Leisure* (Boston: Berry & Wright, Publishers, 1849 or 1850), held at Yale.

[22] Peter Caster details an instance of this type of transition in "*Go Down, Moses* [and Other Stories]: Bibliography as a Novel Approach to a Question of Genre," *PBSA* 96, no. 4 (2002): 509-519.

the actual text to be set for the book, refused further work. An equally plausible explanation is that the composer of the initial title page copied a more elegant style as part of ensuring that the book's content would not be questioned prior to publication. The change then ensued from the necessary resetting of type after distribution of the original title page material and the opportunity presented by acquisition of Rustic.

Title pages filed with copyright applications are not themselves proof of publication; instead, they are a record of the intention to publish. Even after filing for copyright, publishers still had to negotiate with members of the printing trades and arrange for financing, materials, skilled workmen, and machine time to produce a book. At the least, the change in title page layout indicates a break between the initial concept of the book and Berry's capability for bringing the novel into final form.

In the second edition published in late 1851 or 1852 of *The Countess*, Berry expanded the story line slightly toward the ending and reset the text. The new title page switched to modern faces with a discrete line of German-inspired black letter font. Also called Fraktur and with variants in Old English, black letter recalled formal legal documents and German scripts. Although that design appeared occasionally in non-erotic publications, during the 1850s and 1860s it appeared on illicit literature frequently as a single line accenting a title page. Around the middle of that decade and through the next, "New York" became the most common information to be set in black letter. The isolated use of an authoritative yet foreign-appearing type slyly pointed to that city's dominant position as a source for much of the nation's scandalous literature.[23]

[23] George Thompson, *The Countess; or, Memoirs of Women of Leisure* (Boston: W. Berry & Co., [1851 of 1852]), held at AAS.

With the second edition of *The Countess*, Berry's font selection for book texts improved, as he switched to a modern style less worn and clearer than his former newspaper font. Berry included an advance issue of *The Twin Brothers: or, The Fatal Resemblance* at the conclusion, adding twelve pages to *The Countess* and promoting the title, likely just printed or still in press. The teaser text increased the size of the book by a gathering, although the selection of lighter paper helped to keep the weight lower for mailing purposes.[24]

The modification in typestyle and the resetting probably accompanied a change in the production location and a fresh source of book type from a new printer. With Berry's publisher advertisement offering shipping to dealers in the South and West from New York, it would make sense for the firm handling his books to also print from that city. Berry could have made yet another generation of plates from those he had already stereotyped and shipped them from Boston for production, but he may not have made plates of *The Countess*. Resetting the text in a different font required a compositor to once again cast off the text, because the width of letters in different fonts changed enough to alter the length, although the cost of composing type would be cheaper due to the easier work of setting type from material that already had been printed.

[24] As noted in chapter seven, an Adams power press left gripper marks on most gatherings. Berry's printer imposed the book as octavo, with the first signature from the center and others (except the sixth, which had no marks) in the common style. A wrinkle on the thinnest paper in the sixth gathering indicates calendaring of the paper. The thin substrate received imperfect finishing by the paper manufacturer, perhaps being sold at a discount to the publisher.

Rustic appeared infrequently among American books before about 1853.[25] Each of the sizes and designs of type that Berry used in 1849 were available by the middle of that decade from V. & J. Figgins, a large London foundry that exported type around the world, however. Figgins originated Rustic and offered it for sale in the firm's 1845 catalog, as a highly unusual printer's ornament incorporated into the title page of *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill*. Published by Willis Little & Co. in 1850, that book became part of the circle associated with Berry's early works.[26]

The first American foundry known to have offered Rustic in the size matching Berry's publication did so in 1849. The New York firm of John T. White issued a specimen book including two-line pica Rustic (fig. 8.4), along with the other main line types required by Berry. Among other foundries in America, John T. White was known for having manufactured unauthorized copies of foreign fonts for domestic sale. Cheaper and available readily, a pirated English design almost certainly helped William Berry to Americanize the intellectual content of *The Countess*.[27]

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[25]Title page deposits from 1849 to the 1853 give one indication of the predominant fonts in America during the first years that *The Countess* was published. Over hundreds of title pages that remain on deposit with the United States Copyright Office, only five during those years featured plank-design Rustic. Four of those pages contained textual references to nature or to homestead labor, and the fifth, which related to lithographic views, presented a topographical subject. Rustic was used as a main line titling font except as noted in: *Practical Hints on the Subject of Window Ornaments* New-York: G.B. Maigne, 1849); *Conrad Hensler's Mathematical System, for measuring and cutting all kinds of garments*.... (Hartford: Gaylord Wells, 1850); *Rae's Philadelphia Pictorial Directory and Panoramic Advertiser*... (Philadelphia: Julio Rae, 1851), with Rustic as a subtitle font only available from Figgins; *Aunt Phillis's Cabin, or, Southern Life as it is* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co, 1852), with log-like Rustic also used as a subtitle; and *Descriptive Catalogue of Fruits, cultivated and for sale at the Mount Hope Nursery* (Rochester: A. Strong & Co, 1852-1853). Four of the books reproduced the design in a size offered by John T. White in 1849, with those titles being published in New York City (1849); Hartford, Conn. (1850); Philadelphia (1852); and Rochester, N.Y. (1852-1853). Boston produced none. Title pages for 1849-1853 in *Copyright Title Pages of the United States*, 1790-1870, Early Copyright Records Collection, LOC.

[26] Vincent Figgins, *Specimen of Printing Types*, London, 1845, held at Rochester Institute of Technology; and V. & J. Figgins, *Specimen of Plain & Ornamental Types*, London, [1845], held at LOC. Rochester Institute of Technology also holds editions of 1812 and 1839.

[27] *Specimens of Printing Types and Ornaments Cast by John T. White* (New York: John T. White, 1849), held at LOC and Columbia University Rare Books and Special Collection Room. Courtesy, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

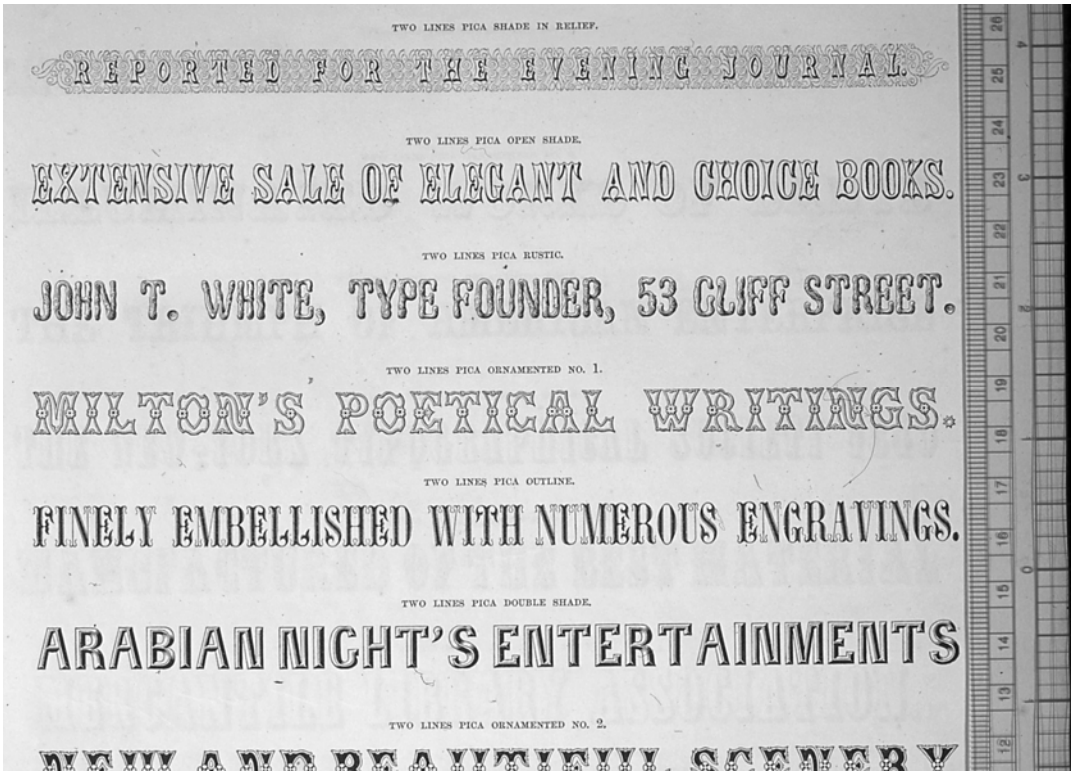

Fig. 8.4. John T. White type specimens (1849)

Rustic and its use implied a technological turn toward the nation's publishing center in the 1840s, the decade during which New York came to dominate the American book trades. Neither of Boston's two major foundries produced Rustic at the time. The next American foundry to offer plank-style Rustic was the Boston firm of Hobart & Robbins in 1851. Boston Type Foundry did not manufacture the font during the late 1840s and early 1850s.[28]

American foundries pirated fonts regularly from foreign sources after the introduction of electrotyping about 1840 with little repercussion against the practices.

[28] *Specimens of Printing Types and Ornaments, from the New England Type & Stereotype Foundery* [sic] (Boston: Hobart & Robbins, successors to Geo. A. Curtis, 1851), held at LOC.

Throughout the early nineteenth century, American foundries sought tariff protection to protect the young domestic type industry from competition with the established firms across the Atlantic.[29] English foundries especially supplied Americans with type through mid-century, although Americans initiating technical advances to strengthen the domestic industry and proved adept at technologies that allowed the copying of foreign designs.

Casting type required first the creation of a design and its copying onto the end of a soft steel bar. With a counterpunch, an engraver struck the center of the letter into the end and carved away the outside of the letter. After hardening, the bar, or punch, could be struck into copper to create a matrix. Fitting the matrix to the mold justified, or squared, the piece, making it a fit receptacle for producing type with identical faces and consistently shaped type bodies. Placed carefully into a type mold wielded by a competent caster, a good matrix ensured accurate production of even tiny sizes of type.[30]

Workers assembled the mold, poured in hot type metal, and quickly lifted the mold to allow lead to reach the matrix before hardening. The hand caster broke open the unit and tossed out the barely cooled new type. Typically, men cast the type, and women broke off the metal trailings, or "jets," and inspected the faces for accuracy. Male workers filed and machined the type bodies, and women smoothed the printing surfaces.

Americans excelled at improving the production of individual type pieces. In 1811, Archibald Binney added a spring to the traditional mold, allowing workers to more quickly return the two haves to their correct positions for another pouring. Responding to

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[29] Early Boston Booksellers, Manuscripts, AAS.

[30] Theodore Low De Vinne, *The Practice of Typography: A Treatise on the Processes of Type-Making, the Point System, the Names, Sizes, Styles and Prices of Plain Printing Types* (New York: The Century Co., 1900), 11-18. Fred Smeijers's *Counterpunch: making type in the sixteenth century, designing typefaces now*, ed. Robin Kinross (London: Hyphen Press, 1996) is a valuable source about the understudied craft of punchcutting.

the difficulty of handcasting ever-more intricate fonts and the demand for faster production, David Bruce invented in 1834 and patented in 1838 a "squirt-machine" with a manual force-pump that mechanized casting. The turn of a handle mechanized pouring lead, swinging the mold upward, breaking it open, and reassembling the unit. Bruce's typecaster multiplied the amount of type one workman could produce.[31] Popular for four decades, Bruce's design nevertheless failed to mechanize the finishing tasks, preserving women's roles in the production of type.[32]

The high level of skill required to be able to cut punches stymied domestic production of matrices, but Americans proved adept at making copies of imported fonts. Each design, purchased in an assortment of a single size of type, comprised a font. In order to use a design in multiple sizes, a printer would have to purchase several fonts. The cost of creating each alphabet inhibited the availability of unusual designs at different sizes. After James Conner in New York began electrotyping matrices for the production of type in 1845, American type founders became capable of producing virtually any font offered by another firm.

Electrotyping provided variety, even though the type lost a small amount of detail in the process. The tediousness of preparing an original punch for each letter or cost of purchasing one from its original founder could be bypassed, speeding up the commercial access to the latest designs. Foundries that originated a font considered unauthorized duplication to be theft that deprived them of sales. Even so, piracy encouraged the desire for more diverse type and probably ultimately increased foundry purchases. American

[31] Nash, "Ornamented Types in America," 118.
[32] De Vinne, *Practice of Typography*, 19-26.

foundries that dared to risk being cut off from future dealings with foreign firms provided an increasing number of fonts for domestic printing.[33]

American inventor David Bruce noted that, with the assistance of electrotyping, domestic foundries copied the designs of Americans as well as foreign foundries. The ease of duplication initiated a period during which

> an indiscriminate system of plundering took place, commencing among some of the minor foundries, upon the older and more extensive establishments, the conscientious proprietors of which, after growling forth in vain their virtuous indignation at such dishonourable conduct, boldly "threw off their coats, rolled up their sleeves," and made a wholesale appropriation of whatever was worth stealing in any direction from each other.[34]

The rapid duplication of fonts makes all the more unusual the scarcity with which one of Berry's most unusual type selections made it into the publications of other publishers. Type, whether electrotyped, stereotyped, or reset into new textual forms, offers abundant clues about William Berry's business strategies and eventual connections to larger networks of erotica.

The Recurrence of Typographical Matter

The persistence of typographical matter links Berry with booksellers Willis Little & Co., the firm in which Berry, from about 1850 to 1851, was an unnamed partner. After venturing into book publishing by copyrighting and offering the crime narrative *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* in 1850, Willis Little & Co. sold the plates to Berry, who reused the pieced-together frame for his advertisement, bound with *Julia King* (1850).[35]

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[33] Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (1972; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 1995), 208.
[34] Nash, "Ornamented Types in America," 119.
[35] It is possible that Henry A. Willis and George Little, both printers at the time in Boston, were partners with Berry in Willis Little & Co. Another origin of the firm's name may have been an attempt to disguise

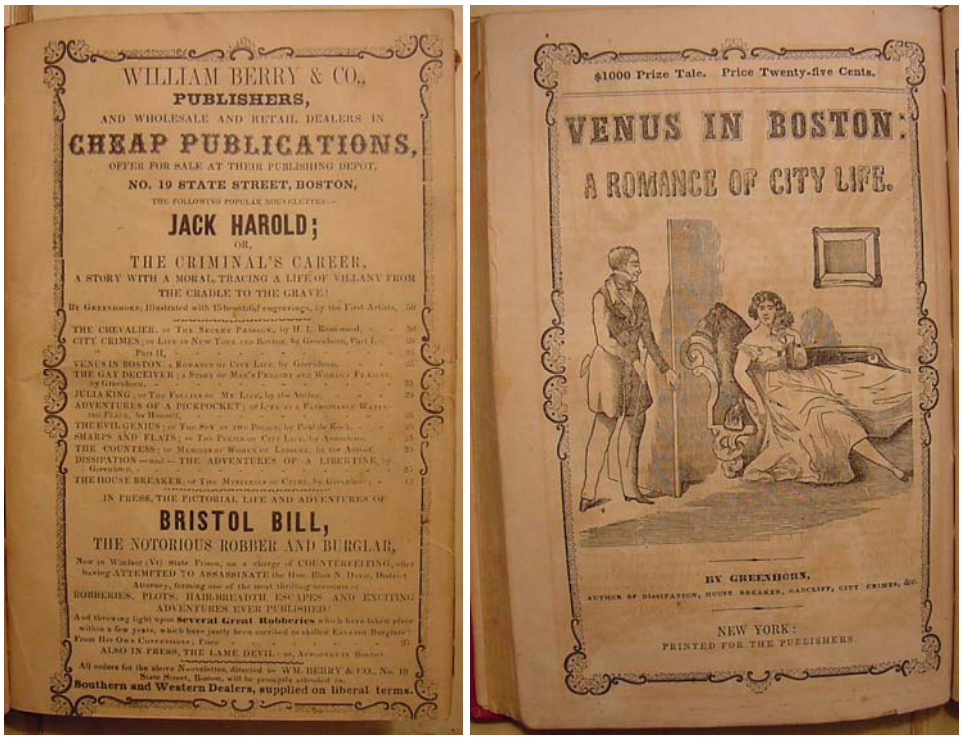

Fig. 8.5. Recurrence of Willis Little advertisement frame segments

Figure 8.5 shows a publisher advertisement in which the compositor reset the elaborate, pieced-together ornamental border, making use of a distinctively damaged center segment tying specific type pieces to an earlier publication. The style of center piece anchoring the upper and lower horizontal borders could be used only twice in each frame, but the pieces in the top lines of the image on the left match the *Bristol Bill* border. Segments in Berry's frame had not been locked tightly into place, allowing the pieces to be knocked out of alignment by the force of multiple impressions. The resulting sloppy appearance due to poor imposition matches the low-quality composition. Only seven large words in ornamented type highlighted the grey, text-laden page, set primarily in

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the operations of the enterprise by making reference to prominent Bostonians Nathaniel Willis, publisher of *Youth's Companion*, and bookseller Charles C. Little of Little & Brown. Both were active in the city's publishing circles in the mid-1840s and through the period that Willis Little & Co. operated.

roman fonts.[36] The image on the right shows a new setting of the type, inverting portions of the previous design but apparently making use of the same font for an advertisement bound in with a copy of *Jack Harold* published in 1855 by P.F. Harris. The plate originated in 1849 or just afterwards to publicize *Venus in Boston*, which was one of many Berry titles that became part of the semi-erotic publishing trade in New York.[37]

As shown in his advertisement on the left, Berry sold through the periodical depot in Boston to readers and directly to potential distributors. He especially sought agents in the South and West, promising "liberal terms" and enticing young men with an opportunity to make their mark upon the world of commerce. In common with equipment manufacturers, publishers typically awarded better terms to buyers who paid in cash rather than on credit or through the exchange of goods. Berry's ad implied that sales to vendors would be in cash.

Agents in other parts of the country who handled publications allowed Berry to bypass traditional publisher marketing strategies. Many publishers sold their own books or arranged to trade titles with other booksellers. Berry's strategy combined a variety of approaches. He recruited dealers with a physical location, and who would be likely to carry a variety of publications. He also sought out middlemen to purchase books for resale, calling them subscription agents rather than colporteurs, as they likely were. Individuals who plied their wares at railroad stations or dock areas sold primarily to men.

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[36] Publisher's advertisement bound in with copyright deposit copy of *Jack Harold*, held at LOC. The paper of the advertisement appears to be contemporary with the book, as do other inserts from the wrappers of two additional Berry books, cited above.

[37] George Thompson, *Jack Harold* (New York: P.F. Harris, 1855); held at LOC. Courtesy, Library of Congress.

Sensational fiction by George Thompson proved immensely popular at these public locations.[38]

Worcester's engraving of the Willis Little building depicted a male arena, much like that sought by traveling agents who approached transportation centers in order to sell to men. Although public places, these reserves of masculinity were privatized by the exclusion of women. Books considered improper for public display could easily be held under counters or in backrooms until requested by customers.

William Berry reissued *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* with the title page imprint of Willis Little & Co., adding an advance issue of *The Revenge* bearing his own copyright notice and imprint. In fact, Willis Little & Company had filed for copyright yet failed to deposit a copy of the publication to secure protection. The spacing of the text showed that Berry removed "forty-nine" from an 1849 notice in order to insert "and fifty," producing a gappy correction and proof that Berry plated the books.[39]

The wrapper bore the names of both firms. On the front, William Berry & Co. took credit for the 1851 publication. A wood engraving of the book's anti-hero, Bristol Bill, dominated the cover. An engraving by F. Worcester of the rogue, who left his wealthy family and sure status to pursue the thrilling life of criminal adventure, conveyed the roughened man of privilege. William Darlington, also known as Bristol Bill, with a ruddy complexion, beard, and strong hands wore with ease the clothes of a respectable gentleman. Although textual changes would be made to the cover plate during its long

[38] On the masculine spheres of sensational fiction and erotica consumption, see Paul J. Erickson, "Welcome to Sodom: The Cultural Work of City-Mysteries Fiction in Antebellum America" (University of Texas, Ph.D. Dissertation, American Studies, 2005).

[39] *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* (Boston: Willis Little & Co.,[1851]), held at Buffalo and Erie County Public Library. The author thanks William H. Loos for his assistance in procuring photocopies of selected pages of that publication.

life, the illustration prepared by Worcester accompanied the exchange of the book's plates among publishers for at least three decades.

On the back cover, W. Little & Co. became the firm listed in Berry's ornamental frame advertisement as a vendor of cheap publications. The material remained unplated, allowing the compositor to update the list of works available. W. Little & Co. expanded Berry's marketing plans by standardizing prices and adding a discount for purchases. Little removed from the listing *The House Breaker*, for which Berry had charged twelve cents; he also dropped the price of H.L. Rookwood's *The Chevalier* to 25 cents. Only *Jack Harold*, promoted as having "sixteen superb engravings," retained the higher price of fifty cents. The publishers offered to mail any of the books singly or at a discount of five for $1 to customers in the United States, establishing a direct line to readers. As the role of the United States Post Office expanded into new avenues of American life, so did the ability of readers, and primarily men, to purchase Berry's titillating publications.

Books as Commerce

The company took advantage of a recently opened avenue for distributing books: federal mail. Only in 1851 did the right of book publishers to send their wares through the mail become legal. The responsibility of the postal service in relationship to newspapers had never been in question. Considered a vital means of connecting citizenry to one another, newspapers received favorable rates, and editors held the right to freely exchange publications with other editors.

That favored position proved decisive in establishing the press as a pillar of public life, according to Richard R. John. The low cost of sending newspapers through the mail

encouraged book publishers in the 1840s to reformat their products. Books manufactured only into sheets and mailed in that form could be sent unbound through the mail at cheap rates. The success of that strategy spurred a price war in the book industry. Story papers provided literature, and especially fiction, to subscribers as serialized novels.[40]

The debate over the role of the post office in American life centered on the responsibility of the national government in facilitating exchanges among the country's residents. Americans wrangled over how to balance the imperative for wide circulation of political intelligence among various parties after the Revolution. In the 1780s, Postmaster General Hazard, himself accused of bias in his selection of newspapers to be sent free through the mails, asserted that "facilitating commercial correspondence" had from the start been the Post Office's mission.[41]

Most post office supporters disagreed, however. Books were more contemplative and less timely sources of information; they seemed more like goods than carriers of culture. Early nineteenth-century Americans continued to debate the way that forms of print supported political and social aims. Books straddled the line between information and commerce, in part because of the extended timeframe for their production.[42]

Small books also appeared much like pamphlets, which by 1816 could be mailed. Many postmasters admitted books, to the detriment of the newspapers also being carried. Even high government officials sometimes sent shipments of books through the mail, relying on the leniency of local postmasters. In the 1820s, the postmaster general

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[40] Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 37.
[41] Dorothy Ganfield Fowler, *Unmailable: Congress and the Post Office* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1977), 9.
[42] Richard B. Kielbowicz, "Mere Merchandise or Vessels of Culture? Books in the Mail, 1792-1942," *PBSA* 82 (1988): 169-200. For more analysis of the role of the post office, see Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office, and Public Information, 1700-1860s* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989).

requested, but was denied, authority to compel postmasters to refuse to carry books. A small number of second-tier publishers in Boston during the 1840s began marketing their books through the mail, despite that prohibition.[43]

Large publishers guarded rights to book sales in their own cities, turning to arrangements with booksellers in other locales only when necessary to ensure regional distribution. Express companies transported shipments to other vendors. Sending deliveries to individuals was another matter. While expensive books might be sent to a customer by express, sales of 25-cent novels to single customers simply could not be profitable with such a distribution strategy.

Railroads became official postal routes in 1837, making delivery faster. Express companies competed heavily with the poorly managed department during the Jacksonian era, but at mid-century the political importance of the Post Office in providing politically appointed jobs for thousands of postmasters across the country encouraged Congress to reassert a monopoly over the mails. The Postal Act of 1845 reduced rates in order to stimulate a greater volume of mail, thereby producing a profit. Charging letters by weight increased incentives for Americans to use the mail for smaller items. Distances still counted in calculations for publications, but weight classes encouraged those mailing to subscribers to enclose fewer sheets or to make use of thinner paper.

In 1851, bound books officially became mailable, and the department commenced city deliveries. These two actions brought the federal government into closer contact with publishing firms and citizens, tightening connections among all three. Book publishers could forge alliances with small dealers and individual customers outside of their own

[43] Fowler, *Unmailable*, 18-19 and 208. John Tebbell cites one publisher, although it is likely that a number of minor publishers quietly followed suit. Major publishers invested in both formal and informal relationships with vendors in other cities would have had little incentive to disrupt their trade patterns.

cities, thereby bypassing the traditional structure of the publishing industry. The local and regional limits to a publisher's sales area melted away, creating the potential for the first truly national book market.[44]

The post office became enmeshed in commerce, and the social operations of the institution brought a distinct masculinity and expectation of white customers to transactions. Post offices were intelligence centers, focused not just on information from faraway relatives but also upon social and political news arriving with those who carried the mail, or transmitted by others who gathered in that public space. These locations provided an atmosphere of camaraderie for those who belonged, but a place of unease for women or blacks. Richard R. John writes that "the post office quickly became, like the city saloon or the Masonic lodge, a bastion of white male solidarity and an adjunct to the racially and sexually stratified world of politics and commerce." Free blacks often found it difficult to obtain their mail without damage, and women underwent harassment and a questioning of their virtue for visits.[45]

Especially in cities, women faced trouble when doing business face to face, rather than by sending a representative. "Ladies' windows" helped women to gain service. Letter boxes also promised some assistance by allowing women to visit specific public locations where delivery boxes had been constructed. They were most often placed alongside bars and hotels, however, merely transferring the service to another place where respectable women would not go unaccompanied. When outdoor boxes finally became available around 1860, women benefited, along with any patron who did not

[44] Carl H. Scheele, *A Short History of the Mail Service* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971), 72-73; John, *Spreading the News*, 37 and 160.
[45] John, *Spreading the News*, 161-167.

desire to become part of the gossip spread through social networks that gathered at the post office.[46]

W. Little & Co.'s offer to mail its publications to customers became part of the masculine sphere of post offices, the growth of a national book market centered primarily in New York, and the extension of federal services into the lives of Americans. The firm attempted to boost its sales to individual buyers, thereby reducing exposure in the local market. At the same time, W. Little & Co. kept packaging costs low by maximizing sales to each place. The bulk sales strategy gave an incentive for small-time vendors to carry the books. The wording of W. Little's advertisement implied that operators might become part of the publishing trade, and would form business relationships within a network of vendors – they need only to respond to the advertisement. Owners of periodical depots or other booksellers already in the profession could be assured of a steady source of publications from a publisher following familiar business practices.

In the ad, Willis Little listed the books for which William Berry had filed for copyright through 1850: *City Crimes*, *The Countess*, *Venus in Boston*, *Adventures of a Pickpocket*, *The Evil Genius*, *Julia King*, *Sharps and Flats*, *Jack Harold*, *and The Chevalier*. Willis Little & Co. had copyrighted *Illustrated Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* in 1850. *The Lame Devil* and *The Revenge*, with promises of *Jack Harold*'s sequel, *The Criminal*, promised as being in press, filled out the offering. All except *The Revenge, Bristol Bill*, and *The Lame Devil* reported Greenhorn as the author. The following year, William Berry & Co. took over the premises at 19 State St., with former occupant Willis Little & Co. disappearing from the city directory as a listed business partnership. Berry's

[46] John, *Spreading the News*, 161-167.

strategy appeared to have been that of building his book list through partnerships and retaining the firm's resources as each venture dissolved.

Berry's expanded publishing list grew faster than the copyrights he held. After his initial foray into acquiring protection for his sensational novels, Berry ceased filing for copyright until associated with Berry, Colby & Co. in the latter 1850s. From 1850 to 1855, William Berry & Co. operated at a different location each year within the printing district of Boston, shifting its operations through a series of addresses: 27 Devonshire, 19 State, 11 Devonshire, 17 Devonshire, and finally 128 Washington in the last year. His publications gave his address as Boston, but wrapper impresses or a shipping address indicated operations outside of that city.

Wrapped in New York

Throughout the 1850s, Berry's publications often bore New York overprints on the title page or wrappers. His books became mingled with more explicit texts in the publishing lists of other vendors. Berry backed away from copyrighting the works of George Thompson but remained involved in the author's publications. It is unclear how much control William Berry actually exercised over the transition of manuscripts to text.

Thompson connected W.L. Bradbury, Willis Little, and Henry Wright to Berry, but the writer's success helped develop the complex links between Berry and New York publishers. Even while working with Berry, Thompson likely had his eye on making his fortune in New York City. Writing under his several pen names, he was the author of perhaps twenty books from 1848 until he finally left for New York around 1853.[47]

[47] George Thompson, *Venus in Boston and Other Tales of Nineteenth-Century City Life*, David S. Reynolds and Kimberly R. Gladman, eds. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), xiv-xv. The appendix

Thompson wrote some novels, such as *The House Breaker*, that Boston publishers declined to market as springing from the pen of the local favorite, Greenhorn. Thompson's marketability lay in his ability to assume many forms, and over the next decade he churned out historical fiction, memoirs, city mysteries, and even his own fictionalized autobiography. As Thompson's visibility in the marketplace waxed, that of Berry waned. Even with Berry's name on the title page of a book, a wrapper might be produced anonymously. Did Berry print his own books during his secretive years between 1850 and 1855, or were the plates sold to another publisher only too happy to hide behind the name of another firm? Some evidence exists in publisher advertisements to suggest that a third scenario took place.

Perhaps Berry gained motivation from the example of Henry L. Williams and Edward P. Williams of Boston. The two brothers worked both separately and together, publishing the novels of J.H. Ingraham and Newton M. Curtis. They integrated their contacts with fiction writers for the Boston story paper, *Yankee*. In 1846, H.L. Williams began his own New York imprint; the men also formed a partnership called the Brothers Williams and listed themselves as printers in the following year's city directory. About three years later, they moved to New York and expanded their operations, perhaps adding a third partner, George H. Williams, thought to have been another brother.[48]

In 1850, after the Williams brothers moved to New York, William Berry experienced his busiest year yet. He published *Life in Boston*, teamed with W.L.

"Surviving Works by George Thompson" establishes the most accurate index heretofore of Thompson's works, especially in its dating of titles. Although some dating is necessarily speculative (such as that for *New-York Life*), the listing provides an excellent basis of conversation about the publications.

[48] *Boston City Directories*, 1847-1848, 277; and Peter Dzwonkoski, ed., "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," 49, part 2, *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1986), 493-494.

Bradbury and then Henry Wright to offer *City Crimes* and other novels, and worked behind the scenes with Willis Little at a periodical depot where each of his publications could be promoted. After his initial years of scrambling to get the best of partners before moving on to the next business opportunity, the prospect would not have been unfamiliar. Berry appears to have established a New York presence as part of alternately competing against, and cooperating with, booksellers and publishers, with each firm guarding its territory from trespass even while building its publishing list by purchasing wholesale from others.

Publishers established a public presence through the outer coverings of their books, but identification printed on wrappers can prove deceptive. By printing a large edition, a publisher reduced the per-unit cost of a book. Yet a sizable edition could take years to completely sell. Publishers estimated the copies they felt confident of selling and balanced their willingness to invest in production against the timeframe for accomplishing that goal. For a fee, binders stored printed sheets until enough demand supported binding them into books as preparation for sale. Thus, bindings, whether wrappers or cloth, could be added years later to sheets printed as part of a single edition.

Publishers who found themselves short of cash might sell overages wholesale in sheets, sending remainders to markets where their own copies would not be likely to compete. The new owners printed wrappers and arranged for their binding. Title page information proves a better way of identifying a textual work across time, but wrapper details often can reveal the exchange of material between publishers. Especially among clandestine publications, such clues are quite valuable.

William Berry began issuing his books with wrappers giving a New York location but no firm's name by late 1850, as indicated by the publisher's advertisement for *Venus in Boston* printed within *Jack Harold*, and using what appear to be the plates for the front wrapper of *Venus in Boston* (fig. 8.5). In the second edition of *The Countess* issued in late 1851 or 1852, he printed the front cover of the wrapper with the same plate as for the first edition, making only type corrections for the imprint. He deleted his firm's name and address and replaced it with text indicating that the publication had been printed in New York for an unnamed publisher.

An advertisement printed on the back cover of that second edition presented an expanded list, highlighting Samuel Lover's *Handy Andy: A Tale of Irish Life*. Undoubtedly pirated in order to price the novel at half the cost of D. Appleton's "cheap edition" 380-page reissue of its own 1843 book, the knockoff also condensed the number of pages nearly in half. Berry cannily worded his advertisement with the promise, "The typography is equal to the 50-cent edition, and the book contains the same number of beautiful illustrations." Readers may have interpreted the line to confirm that Berry also had two steel engravings, as in the 1851 Appleton issue, or that the book featured all twenty-two of the original steel illustrations in the original edition of 1843.[49]

Bringing in a Samuel Lover work stretched his audience toward popular but not illicit reading, balancing his reach toward those interested in more salacious titles. He dropped only *The Countess*, advertised on the front cover of the wrapper, from the books offered by W. Little & Co. in the previous year. As listed and spelled in the advertisement, Greenhorn books included *The Outlaw*, *The Road to Ruin*, *Dissipation*,

[49] Samuel Lover, *Handy Andy: A Tale of Irish Life* (New York: D. Appleton; Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843) and (New-York: D. Appleton & Co., 1851).

Radcliff, *Housebreaker*, and *Adventures of a Pickpocket*, the last of which he himself had copyrighted. He also promoted a publication he had printed since then: *Irish Widow* (1851), issued with two wood engraved frontispieces of topless women and two-column text. Berry tapped into the wholesale market for erotic books with publications. Paul de Kock books titled *Madeline the Avenger*, *Paul the Profligate*, *Adventures of a Country Girl*, and *Simon the Radical*, offered in the 1840s by New York agents handling periodicals, were also available.[50]

During the middle of the decade, the famed minister and orator Henry Ward Beecher warned from his Brooklyn pulpit of the dangers imposed upon readers by authors such as Paul de Kock. Like Laurence Sterne, de Kock turned his skills toward the beautification of sin, adding to the allure of ungodliness rather than exposing its ugly face. The very artfulness of certain authors heightened the danger associated with coming across information about indecent subjects, according to Beecher. To his consternation, the minister found that Americans eagerly bought such books, despite de Kock's reign as "the literary prince of darkness." Beecher reported learning from a bookseller in Ohio that Paul de Kock was far and away the most popular author. Beecher, and many other Americans, had a difficult time telling apart the works of Charles Paul de Kock, the French author, and those of domestic writers who latched on to that identity.[51]

One instance of the actual French writer's work being imported as part of the de Kock phenomenon can be discerned in the care that a translator took to preserve his priority over the imported text. At the 1845 publication of *Paul the Profligate*, George

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[50] M. [Joseph] Mery, *The Irish Widow; or, The Last of the Ghosts. Translated from the French* (Boston: William Berry & Co., 1851), held at AAS.
[51] Henry Ward Beecher, *Lectures to Young Men, or Various Important Subjects* (Salem: John P. Jewett & Co., 1846), 175-176.

Braithwait Smith, the translator and financier, attempted to enforce courtesy of the trade over his publication. The title page stated that the work was "Translated from Original Proof-Sheets Obtained at a Great Expense from the French Publishers, in Advance of the Parisian Publications." During the height of cheap book competition in the mid-1840s, Braithwait knew he faced immediate piracy, making necessary the announcement of his financial and social claim to *Paul the Profligate*.[52]

A blue lattice frame, encircled with vines and with cherubs bearing bows on either side, was printed on the front and back covers and engraved by a firm possibly called Butler & Stripe. The author cut costs by printing on cheap paper with shives. The back cover listed de Kock works recently published, adding to the four listed above the title *Harriet Wilson*, which Berry had ascribed to "By Herself." An 1845 copy of that book also features a wide, colored frame, using red and blue for the art and black for the text.

These five books proved popular at the lower end of the erotica spectrum over a number of years. Their illustrations contrasted with the angular Worcester style, offering a more European sensibility, even in the less skillful postures of some of the subjects. Inserted illustrations were printed on even cheaper grades of white paper than the shivey text block.

In contrast to Berry's own style, *Simon the Radical* and *Paul the Profligate* contained 116 and 128 pages numbered according to the usual publisher practice that counted title pages but not frontispieces. These books, in the same formats, proved saleable at least through the early 1860s for Jeremiah H. Farrell. In 1863 or later, Farrell

[52] Charles P. de Kock, *Paul the Profligate: or Paris as It Is. A Novel* (New York: Published for the Translator, 1845), held at Yale. The engraver's name is difficult to read.

reprinted *Simon the Radical*, with one page showing intervening damage to the text from a broken and repaired plate.[53]

By the same author, Berry also advertised *Confessions of a Lady's Waiting Maid* and *Chevalier D'Faublas* in 50-cent editions. Another publication he listed was carried by an unnamed erotica network probably with origins in New York between 1845 and 1855. He sold a 25-cent edition of *Secret Habits*, an advice book purportedly written by a French doctor named Jean Dubois, warning mothers on how to protect their daughters from the practice of masturbation. A surviving copy of that book bears an imprint from Philadelphia, stating its availability from booksellers. The 180-page book included hand-colored, inserted lithographs. Berry appears to have selected only one title from the network that carried *Secret Habits* in the early 1850s, and he did not advertise that his own book incorporated illustrations.

The wholesaler behind the group coded advertisements with the phrase "cheap books" and "cheap publications." The originator offered a variety of books, including several by the actual Charles Paul de Kock. The books could be picked up at bookstalls around the country, purchased through mail order, and ordered at a discount by southern and western dealers.

Regional Networks

Book publishers participated in an exchange system whereby firms arranged to trade for stock of similar value, keeping track of the retail price in their accounts rather

[53] [Harriette Wilson], *Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion. Written by Herself* (New York: [s.n.], 1845) and Charles Paul de Kock, *Simon the Radical* (New York: J.H. Farrell [1847?]), reprinted 1863 or later. The advertisement in *Paul the Profligate* lists *Adventures of a Country Girl*, with eight illustrations, as being in press; no copy of that work could be located.

than the actual cost of the books. This often advantaged publishers who cut costs, allowing them to procure better quality publications from more prestigious publishers who worked on smaller profit margins.

Aided by the exchange system, the popular fiction publisher U.P. James in Cincinnati advertised its ability to fulfill orders for more than 300 different books, with authors including Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Ned Buntline, J.H. Ingraham, George Lippard, Samuel Lover, Frederick Marryat, George W.M. Reynolds, George Sand, and Eugene Sue, often in pirated editions. The company also gave wholesale prices, allowing the firm to state reductions that ensured profit margins on top of the cost of production.

Like other publishers, U.P. James offered discounts for cash or volume purchases, with greater reductions allowed for vendors outside of local selling area. At mid-century, each two dollars' worth of books purchased received a twenty-percent discount from James. Twenty-five-cent books without copyright royalties, extra illustrations, or complex type might be charged at half that cost to another vendor. Shortly before the Civil War, average 25-cent volumes sold to the trade for $10 per 100 volumes.[54]

James served as the core of a distribution system for cheap novels in the western book trade, and the firm's practices exemplifying how regional distribution patterns expanded into national sales. No evidence could be uncovered to link James to illicit

[54] Walter Sutton, *The Western Book Trade: Cincinnati as a Nineteenth-Century Publishing and Book-Trade Center: Containing A Directory of Cincinnati Publishers, Booksellers, and Members of the Allied Trades, 1796-1880 and A Bibliography* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press for the Ohio Historical Society, 1961), 201 and 208-210. Additionally, yearly trade sales allowed publishers to purchase remainders and plates from one another. Few titles that might be considered erotic have survived mid-century printed programs for auctions or trade sales. Among the few orders in published catalogs that contain such literature is the invoice of G.G. White of Oxford, Ohio, offering for sale two copies each of "Walker on Beauty," "Walker on Women," and "Phrenology and Mesmerism" within a larger list of lay medical advice, religious books, and crime stories. Those items were not listed by Ashbee, however. See *Second Catalogue (Additions). Nineteenth Cincinnati Trade Sale, Oct. 15, 1850. Catalogue of Books, Blank Books, Letter and Cap Paper, Cards, Stationery, &c. to be Sold at Auction On Tuesday, October 15th, 1850, and Following Days, by C.S. Woodruff, Sales Room, S.E. corner of Walnut and Fifth Streets…* (Cincinnati: G.W. Tagart, 1850), held at AAS.

publishing, but the firm's practices were strikingly similar to those of Berry and networks of erotica, not all of which were centered in New York.

Meyer & Co. served as an outlet in Philadelphia in 1845, issuing its imprint on a wrapper for a consecutively numbered sixty-two page book including *The Handsome Cherubino; or, Adventures of a General Lover* and *Gustavus! The Don Juan of France!*[55] The shive-filled paper of Meyer's publications fits into the technological trajectory of paper manufacturers in the Philadelphia area of the 1840s.

The New York outlet called Holland & Glover's Depot for Cheap Publications also may have been a source for obtaining *The Handsome Cherubino* in slightly larger type. That firm issued the title in a thirty-two page length. At least one surviving copy of *Gustavus* appears to be a shortened form of the French book, which the famous London pornographer William Dugdale published in an English translation in 1839.[56] An unattributed sixty-two page copy of *The Grisettes of Paris; or Wife, Husband and Lover* maintains the typographic style and layout of Meyer & Co.'s publication of the paired works while reducing the size of the paper and of the margins. That title may be the same as *Gay Grisettes*, of which no American copy is known to still exist.[57] In a surviving copy of Meyer's publication of the pair of books, an extremely faint, right-reading image of a publisher advertisement can be discerned. Although the title of the books cannot be read, careful photocopying to highlight contrast and applying raked light reveals the remainder

[55] Charles Paul de Kock, *The Handsome Cherubino or, Adventures of a General Lover* and *Gustavus! The Don Juan of France!* (Philadelphia: W. Meyers & Co., [ca. 1845?]), bound together.
[56] Paul de Kock, *The Handsome Cherubino; or, Adventures of a General Lover* (New York: Holland & Glover's Depot for Cheap Publications, [n.d.]). Charles Paul de Kock, *Gustavus, or, the young rake [Le mauvais sujet]* (London: W. Dugdale, 1839). Dugdale's edition numbered 206 pages.
[57] *The Grisettes of Paris; or, Wife, Husband and Lover* ([U.S.]: n.p., [1845?]), held at AAS.

[floral border]

HIGHLY IMPORTANT WORKS

NEW BOOKS

IN PRESS

And will shortly be published

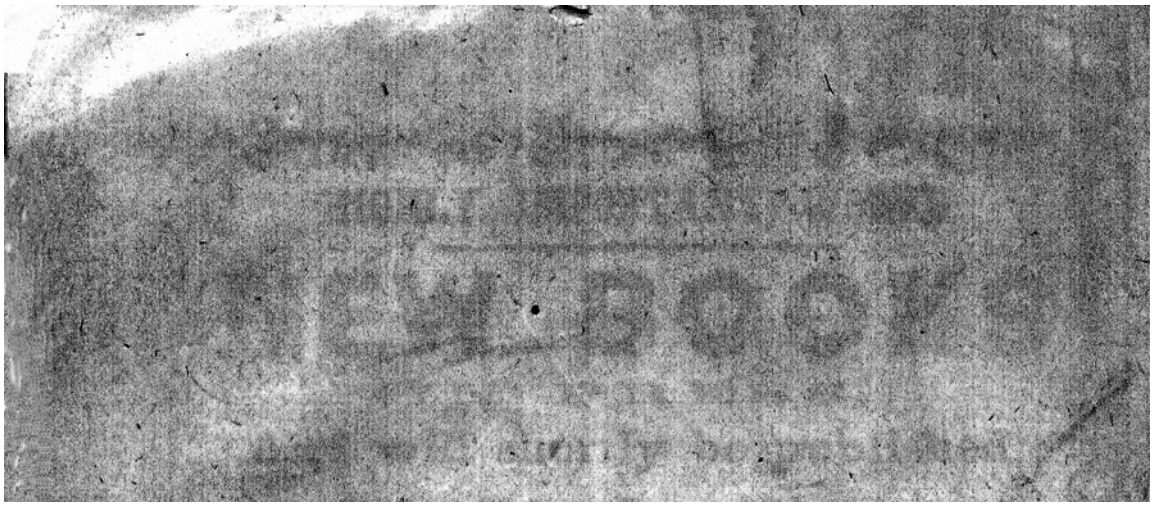

Fig. 8.6. Meyer ad facsimile (top) and original (bottom)

of the text in serif and gothic (sanserif) faces, reproduced in *Figure 8.6*. Once the facsimile is seen, the outlines of text in the original ad can be detected.[58]

The size of the ad shadow on Meyer's publication indicated a larger original image, yet verbiage was identical to the advertisement on the back cover of a copy of *Secret Habits* printed in New York by 1855. The Philadelphia ad employed a vine-like

[58] It is difficult to determine how a right-reading image could have been transferred onto that cover. Wet ink leaves an offset of an image on secondary sheets that are wrong reading (or mirror image). Placing a sheet on an inked form would have resulted in a complete transfer rather than the shadowing, non-inked appearance of the advertisement. The most likely explanation lies in the tendency of cheap inks to shed oil over time. A publisher advertisement printed with a poorly manufactured ink might have transferred enough oil from its verso to form a right-reading image on the sheet behind it. Perhaps the bookseller attached an insert, which has since disappeared, to a sold book. Such a strategy would have distanced W. Meyer & Co. from the complete list available, only revealing the two titles in the one publication to have derived from that firm while suggesting that others could be procured. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.

frame; that from New York lay within a three-line border with geometric corner pieces. Both styles of frame segments could be acquired from type foundries across the country. In the latter ad, a black letter font for the phrase "In Press and will shortly be Published" hinted that the main supplier might be doing business out of New York City.

Berry offered the above books, selling each for 25 cents. He introduced three new titles in his fifty-cent line: *Confessions of a Lady's Waiting Maid*, advertised in *Life in Boston and New England Police Gazette* in the summer of 1851; *Chevalier D'Faublas*, purportedly by Paul de Kock; and James Lindridge's *The Merry Wives of London*. The latter appeared without the author's name, enfolding the writer within a long relationship to providers of erotica.

Like George W.M. Reynolds' works a "penny dreadful" issued in cheap weekly installments, the fall 1850 serial came out in twenty-six parts, with the book dated by the first issue of September 16, 1850. George Vickers published Reynolds and Lindridge, among other English writers of urban thrillers.[59] Berry picked up the text for reprinting, but no copy of that book appears to have survived. Most of the titles that retailed for fifty cents contained extra illustrations or were double-length books, such as *Jack Harold*, advertised as having sixteen illustrations, or *City Crimes,* with nearly 200 pages.

The Married Woman's Private Companion filled out the last of the added books. Charles Lohman, writing under the name of Dr. A.M. Mauriceau, had penned the book as part of publicizing the services of his wife, Ann Lohman. While she served a sentence in New York for providing abortion services to her clients in 1847, he put together a largely derivative work on physiology that strategically mentioned the work of Madame Restell,

[59] James Lindridge, *The Merry Wives of London. A Romance of Metropolitan Life* (London: Printed for the Booksellers, 1850), issued in twenty-six numbers, starting Sept. 16, 1850; and (London: G. Vickers, 1850).

the name under which Ann Lohman did business. In promoting her operations, he came under scrutiny for publishing an obscene book but himself escaped conviction. Lohman or his associate Joseph Trow stereotyped the plates for the book, reissuing it ten times through the Civil War in the same size, and with the same number of pages of both prefatory and textual matter.[60]

Writing about popular books in Ohio and western areas, Walter Sutton noted that about a year after the book's publication, advertisements asserted that in the last quarter of the year alone, the book had sold 25,000 copies at $1 each.[61] Other firms quickly attempted to cash in on the success of Lohman's book. Another version exists that, from catalog descriptions, appears to be Lohman's actual text with an updated title page bearing the date of 1851. Two misspellings of the word "Pregnancy" omit the second letter "n" and suggest that a different publisher purchased wholesale the sheets from a previous year's printing, replaced the original title page to make the volume look new, and then resold the publication.[62]

Berry also sold that book. He offered a 250-page version described as the third edition to readers of *Life in Boston* in 1850, repeating the claims of impressive sales

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[60] Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Knopf, 2002, 208-209. On reprintings, note A.M. Mauriceau, *The Married Woman's Private Medical Companion: Embracing the Treatment of Menstruation, or Monthly Turns, During Their Stoppage, Irregularity, or Entire Suppression: Pregnancy, and How It May Be Determined, With the Treatment of Its Various Diseases: Discover to Prevent Pregnancy, the Great and Important Necessity Where Malformation or Inability Exists to Give Birth: To Prevent Miscarriage or Abortion: When Property and Necessary to Effect Miscarriage, When Attended with Entire Safety: Causes and Mode of Cure of Barrenness, or Sterility* (New York: [s.n.], 1847. An additional printing of the book in 1855 contained 228 rather than the usual 238 pages, with the formatting changing from duodecimo to sextodecimo; the text of that copy could not be seen to verify its similarity. Joseph Trow may have been involved in publishing both versions. A facsimile of the first edition is available (New York: Arno Press, 1974).

[61] Sutton, *The Western Book Trade*, 199.

[62] A.M. Mauriceau, *The Married Woman's Private Medical Companion: Embracing the Treatment of Menstruation, or Monthly Turns ... Pregnacy [sic], and How It May be Determined, With The Treatment of Its Various Diseases: Discovery to Prevent Pregnacy [sic] ...* (New York: [s.n.], 1851).

reported in western cities. Willis & Little offered both hardbound and paperback versions, for $1 and 50 cents, respectively, with the cheaper version still advertised by William Berry & Co. 1854 in *Life in Boston*.[63]

Numerous other versions existed. At least one of the publishers who attempted to make money from the publication became a target for Anthony Comstock more than a decade later but in part because of sales of the book. An undated copy produced by Seth Hunsdon of Albany, New York, took on Lohman's cumbersome title but altered the text. He ascribed the work to Robert James Culverwell, an English writer of physiological whose texts were ripe for pirating in the United States. Hunsdon edited the illustrated volume, taking the alias of M.B. LaCroix, and issued the book in wrappers. Also writing as LaCroix, Hunsdon published *Matrimony Made Easy* in 1854 and the more explicit *Dr. La Croix's Physiological View of Marriage*, also a sextodecimo, which he advertised as the "One hundredth edition." For his pains, Hunsdon became one of the publishers arrested by Anthony Comstock under New York state law more than a decade later for selling obscene literature. With Berry's identity submerged by 1857, *Life in Boston*, having become *Life in Boston and New York*, publicized a 25-cent copy of M.B. LaCroix's *Physiological View of Marriage*, with "250 pages and 130 fine Plain or Colored Lithographs and Plates" that could be sent by mail across the country.[64]

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[63] "Health! Beauty!! And Happiness!!!", *Life in Boston, and New England Police Gazette*, 2, no. 46 (August 10, 1850) and "Life of Books," *Life in Boston, and New England Police Gazette*, 6, no. 36 (May 13, 1854). Berry sold the works of Frederick Hollick through Willis Little & Co., listing Hollick's *The Marriage Guide; or Natural History of Generation* for sale through Willis Little & Co. in *Life in Boston, and New England Police Gazette* 3, 17 (January 4, 1851). Boston Newspapers Collection, AAS.

[64] An 1844 title by Culverwell was reprinted by an American firm in 1849, and in 1847, the author had just released a further work through a London publisher. R.J. Culverwell, *Porneiopathology; a Popular Treatise on Venereal and Other Diseases of the Male and Female Genital System: With Remarks on Impotence, Onanism, Sterility, Piles, and Gravel, and Prescriptions for their Treatment* (New York: Redfield, 1844 [1849]), reported as the twentieth edition; Robert James Culverwell, *Guide to Health and Long Life: A Popular and Companionable Treatise. How to Live; What to Eat, Drink, and Avoid; What*

Berry had begun distancing himself from the public face of selling his books much earlier. One sign of this can be seen in an 1852 advertisement. William Berry announced his physical location as 11 Devonshire in Boston yet phrased his discounted prices with the expectation that readers would prefer to have their purchases mailed. By including the cost of mailing the books within their price, he gave an incentive for readers to order without personally perusing the volumes at a local outlet. At the same time that he began citing more explicit books in his catalogue, he also pointed potential agents away from his own locations. Berry's ad requested that interested parties contact Howard & Co. through a letter box in the New York post office. Despite the vagueness of the information about just which books that firm could supply, positioning the firm's contact information under an announcement for the new novel *Handy Andy* indicates that Berry or those with whom he exchanged books were not strangers to book piracy.

Berry's description of his book as "containing nearly 200 pages of matter" and illustrations is similar to that of an unauthorized edition published by Dick & Fitzgerald in the 1860s containing 197 pages, two illustrations, and a two-column layout. By 1850, William B. Dick and Lawrence R. Fitzgerald were partners in Garrett, Dick & Fitzgerald, one of a chain of firms evolving from Burgess, Stringer & Company and often involved

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Exercise ([London]: For the Author, 1847) and Robert James Culverwell, *Married Woman's Private Medical Companion: Embracing the Treatment of Menstruation, or Monthly Turns, During Their Stoppage, Irregularity, or Entire Suppression: Pregnancy, and How It May Be Determined, With the Treatment of Its Various Diseases: Discovery to Prevent Pregnancy*... [Albany, N.Y.: M.B. La Croix, 1850-1859?]. Other books included M.B. LaCroix, *Matrimony Made Easy* (Albany NY: McGowen & Gewin? 1854) and *Dr. La Croix's Physiological View of Marriage* (Albany: M.B. La Croix, 1864). Seth Hunsdon entry, "Report of Persons Arrested under the Auspices of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice for the year 1873," Records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, container 1, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. "Private Medical Treatise," *Life in Boston and New York* (April 11, 1857), held at AAS.

in the reprinting of foreign books. Tenuous as these ties are, they offer insight into the transformation of one company's competitive gamble into a cheap reprint years later.[65]

From Boston, Berry attempted to become part of the publishing circles in New York City. *Life in Boston and Sporting Chronicle* became *Life in Boston and New England Police Gazette*. The newspaper continued to carry bits of information about literature available through Berry and to promote books, regardless of whether he held copyright on them. In 1849, *Life in Boston and Sporting Chronicle* offered *Venus in Boston* and *Adventures of a Pickpocket* as weekly serials. In 1850 and 1851, *Life in Boston and New England Police Gazette* ran portions of *Jack Harold*, *Sharps and Flats*, *Mysteries of Leverett Street Jail*, *The Criminal*, *The Road to Ruin*.[66] After 1850, Berry ceased filing for copyright on Thompson's novels, even when he serialized them.

Life in Boston took on a moniker promoting regional sales, but applying New York imprints to his books allowed him to approach customers nationally, taking advantage of customer conceptions of that city as a dangerous urban playground. Berry's book imprints show him to be an entrepreneur attempting to convey to customers and the trade his standing among those active in the erotica trade.

At the same time, he announced his wares to the New York trade, perhaps stiffening a defense against those who might attempt to pirate the books of a non-local publisher. Promoting his books as being from New York allowed him to escape

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[65] The firm began as Burgess, Stringer & Co., becoming Burgess and Garrett; Garrett & Company (at 18 Ann St.), and Garrett, Dick & Fitzgerald before finally the better known Dick & Fitzgerald in 1858. That firm gained a reputation for specializing in 25-cent novels by authors such as Ned Buntline, J.H. Ingraham, and Newton M. Curtis. Stringer left the original firm in 1848 to form Stringer & Townsend. See "Dick and Fitzgerald," in "American Literary Publishing Houses," 120; and Madeleine B. Stern, ed., *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century America* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980), 101-103.

[66] Reynolds and Gladman, introduction to Thompson, *Venus in Boston*, xv.

geographic bookselling boundaries in his primary place of business while becoming party to the concentration of erotica vendors operating from Ann Street in New York City.

George Thompson

Berry advertised uncopyrighted Thompson titles in *Life in Boston and New England Police Gazette* in 1851, but after the following year, he lost the ability to assert himself as chief publisher of George Thompson's novels. During 1852, no publishers known from erotica publishing networks in Boston and New York filed for copyright on Thompson's works either in the District Court of Massachusetts, where Berry lived, or in the Southern District of New York, which served residents within the New York City area (*Appendix C*). Thompson's exact whereabouts are sketchy, but he asserted in his purported *Autobiography* that he moved to New York City prior to publishing his memoirs. Therefore, between 1852 and 1853, Thompson removed himself from Boston and relocated to New York City.

Proximity to that city's publishing circles brought fresh opportunities for the author, who continued churning out novels that in the 1850s were produced more frequently, with greater use of elegant modern face type on text opening pages and one-column layouts throughout the text block. His move also coincided with a new burst of copyright claims that cited him as author under his actual name rather than a pseudonym. Berry's eleven filings had referred to Thompson as Greenhorn, usually followed by a list of previously published titles; Himself; the Author; Paul de Kock; and Asmodeus. The fifteen copyright applications filed in the Southern District of New York more frequently gave him credit as George Thompson, G.T. or not at all. Only in the cases of the

fictionalized memoirs titled *Adolene Wellmont* and *Petite Bunkum*, a satire upon P.T. Barnum's forthcoming autobiography, did the filer claim for him a pen name.

In Boston, William Berry, Berry & Wright, and Willis Little & Co. had controlled the author's output, with Berry maintaining an interest in each of the partnerships. Once in New York, Thompson became the subject of competition among publishers, finding ready associates when he declined to work any longer with partners. George W. Hill, George C. Holbrook, P.F. Harris, and Frederick Brady initiated copyright applications on his works, with George Ackerman also filing for a title that might be Thompson's. The prolific writer claimed rights as author and proprietor only for a single novel, gaining control over a German translation, but otherwise left the business of publication to others.

A final advertisement printed on a wrapper of *The Twin Brothers*, testifies to Thompson's shift to New York and Berry's failing attempts to continue managing the output of the ever-more-popular author. About 1855, a publisher's advertisement appeared listing primarily Thompson's works printed by William Berry. A compositor had altered the typographic style from that associated with Berry, replacing the Tuscan ornamental and slab serif outline fonts used by previous Berry ads for main lines and new titles with modern faces.

The updated listing contained only a single condensed titling font: a Tuscan outline with a white star within the shaded lower half of each letter. More streamlined and compact, the ad amplified the number of books from previous Berry lists, emphasizing the suitability of such books for resale opportunities. A "Catalogue of Highly Popular and Very Saleable Works" offered "Handsomely-printed editions" to the

trade at a discount or as single copies to be mailed to individuals. Berry listed no precise address, supplying only the name of "Perry & Co., Publishers, New-York."[67]

Despite the alteration of contact information, surviving copies of the works cited match Berry's production style and overlap with additional books advertised in his *Life in Boston* periodicals. *The Twin Brothers* listed titles known to have been printed at one time by the publisher, all dating from no later than 1853. While the name spelled and sounded close to that of Berry's, it is not his. Perhaps another publisher arranged a deception through the similarity.

Upon close inspection, each of the instances in which the word "Perry" appears can be seen evidence that the original plate read "Berry." A tiny remainder of a lower bowl from a "B" can be detected on the "P" of the firm's name. The ad is printed on the back cover of the wrapper for *The Twin Brothers*, with text inside of a double-rule frame identifying origin in New York. The phrase "Perry & Co., Publishers" on the lower-most line shifts to the right slightly rather than centering, and the line concludes with a comma.

Measuring the presumed center of the type reveals that a "W." easily could have provided the correct balance for the line. The lower curve of the bowl in the first "P" (in "Perry") appears straightened at its lower cusp, unlike the fuller curve on an identical letter in "Publishers." The date of the imprint would have been expected on the line below. Instead, a white space resulted, throwing out of balance the amount of space between the frame and text at the bottom and top of the page.

Alterations also become visible on the title page for *The Twin Brothers,* an advertisement for *The House Breaker*, and the title page of an advance issue of

[67] George Thompson, *The Twin Brothers: or The Fatal Resemblance* (New York: Perry & Co., 185-), held at AAS.

Dashington in the publication. On *Dashington*'s title page remained a line connecting Perry & Co. to 23 State St., two doors down from the Great Periodical Depot and Berry's address in 1851. By 1852, William Berry had removed his business location back to Devonshire, never returning to State Street and distancing himself slightly from the former Willis Little sales outlet.

It is possible that Berry, rather than a later owner of the plates, directed that type be chiseled off, leaving just enough information so that customers could find him by word of mouth. A somewhat more likely explanation, however, is that another publisher acquired the plates for the advertisements and texts and removed enough information about the former owner to enter the field of semi-erotic publications with a new company name. Assuming a name similar to that of a previous vendor protected the real publisher's reputation while signaling to customers that comparable products could be obtained. Publishers maintained a delicate balance between visibility that generated sales and discretion. The texts, publisher ads, and wrapper were bound together about 1855, demonstrating that the vendor with control over Berry's newest publications refused to make his true identity known. Other publishers who published Thompson's novels did not hide behind false names.

Transition to New York

Thompson appears to have turned first to smaller concerns in attempting to establish himself as a New York writer, with George W. Hill and George C. Holbrook two early publication partners. Publisher advertisements reveal that connections persisted between Berry and Thompson's New York activities. Copyright records, distinctive

typographical evidence, and publisher advertisements are among the bits of evidence that offer insight into the longevity of Berry's publications and the disposition of his original plates for certain books. Berry may not have succeeded in parlaying his publishing list into long-lasting competition with New Yorkers, but the author he helped launch and the artifacts of his relationship with Thompson became embedded in the publishing lists of erotica dealers in that city.

George W. Hill copyrighted *Adolene Wellmont* in 1853, also filing that year for three additional titles but failing to complete deposits for *Kate Castleton: or, The Beautiful Milliner*, *Catharine and Clara, or, The Double Suicide*, and *The Brazen Star, or, The Adventures of a New York M.P.* In late 1853, he submitted a title page for *The Gay Girls of New York: or, Life on Broadway*, and in February of the following year he deposited the printed copy of that book. In the published copies of *Adolene Wellmont* and *The Brazen Star* dated 1853, Hill printed the same copyright notice, implanting enough of the notice on the latter to imply that protection might be in force. He knocked off the final line of the blurb in *The Brazen Star*, obscuring the fact that the deposit had not yet been (and would not be) made for that title.[68]

The other two books also shared the same publisher's advertisement, printed respectively on the books as the inside back cover and as part of the text block. Hill listed *Adolene Wellmont* and *Kate Castleton* as "just published" and *The Gay Girls of New York* as "In Press, and in a few days will be published…." He sold the publications from his

[68] George Thompson, *Adolene Wellmont; or the Female Adventurer* (New York: George W. Hill, 1853), held at AAS; and George Thompson, *The Brazen Star, or, the Adventures of a New York M.P.: A True Tale of the Times We Live In* (New York: G.W. Hill, 1853), *Wright American Fiction Series*, II, 2478. The numbering of the latter is a bit odd, counting as if eight pages of material preceded the title page and with the text jumping from page fifty to fifty-three. The microfilmed copy has pages twenty-five and twenty-six, which probably contained an illustration, excised. Original material printed in the text block probably included twenty-four leaves, with the omission of pages fifty-one and fifty-two related to trimming the text down to three signatures. Frontispieces or other material were not filmed in the Wright reformatting.

office at 289 Broadway, accepting requests from individuals and firms interested in representing his books, both in person or by mail application. Emphasizing the popular appeal of the books, he asserted that they could easily be sold by "young men and agents who may desire to travel." Booksellers also could make a profit on his books due to his "reasonable terms."[69]

Hill provided colored wrappers and more illustrations to entice buyers for books with fewer text pages than those offered by Berry. His selection of varying sizes and designs for text type suggested his recent entry into the field of publishing, forcing him to rely upon the availability of manuscripts and illustrations for determining a publication's physical character, rather than being able to direct the content into an established format. Covered in a dark blue wrapper likely tinted with Prussian blue, *Adolene Wellmont* contained four-and-a-half gatherings of eight leaves, making only seventy-two pages. Examining *Adolene Wellmont* reveals that Hill cut costs by reusing plates acquired from other publishers.

Although some of the illustrations printed on the wrapper and with the text block showed skill in their engraving, their techniques contrasted. The front cover image of the heroine copied an English illustration style, even including the unknown artist's cent-sign signature. The publisher's advertisement for *Kate Castleton* portrayed that book's heroine with a babe in her arms, with the refined engraving signed by a sculptor named Avery. Like F.E. Worcester, who collaborated with Berry before moving on to small work with *Harper's Weekly*, Avery worked for at least one major domestic periodical of the day. A

[69] Publisher advertisement on wrapper of Thompson, *Adolene Wellmont* (1853).

signed engraving bearing Avery's name appeared in *Harpers' New Monthly Magazine* in 1850.[70]

Hill acquired from Henry L. Williams the plate of a ballerina first printed on the hand-colored cover of an 1845 book that Williams issued in Boston. Many illustrations copied from other publications were merely reengraved from the originals, rather than actually being transferred in plates, but Hill's picture matches that of Williams in specific ways. The details and wear patterns of the illustration are identical. The measurements, which vary slightly but are proportional and within tolerances for substrate shrinkage.[71]

The several illustrations in the text block and on the back cover varied. In one, round-faced subjects in common American clothing accompanied the book's subplot of a woman cross-dressing as a man as she accompanied her lover into the male world of nighttime streets and barrooms. In others, white line engravings depicted upper-class subjects carefully posed to convey suspense and a stock engraving of a pensive woman on a balcony, with Avery's signature. Type capitalization and damage hinted that relevant captions had been added to existing plated illustrations.

In 1854, *Adolene Wellmont*, *Kate Castleton*, and *The Gay Girls* also could be procured from Federhen & Co. at 9 and 13 Court Street in Boston. The firm did business at 13 Court St. through the early 1860s with the backing of Charles Thacher, expanding its premises for the year in which several of Thompson's novels became associated with Federhen publications. The company announced the sale of those three titles in a

[70] An interesting parallel exists between the suggestive postures of two of Hill's illustrations and the sly-eyed style of fashion models in the first issue of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in June 1850. By the next issue, the magazine's fashion pages were filled with models with larger and clearer eyes prepared by Lossing-Barritt, reducing their seductive appeal. Lossing-Barritt became a major source of engravings for the magazine. The shift in detail de-eroticized the seasonal fashions offered by the magazine, distinguishing its illustrations from the posturing and details of sensational literature – even though the group of workers preparing illustrations for both *Harper's* and urban thrillers seem to have overlapped.
[71] *Julia; or, The Singular Adventures of Beautiful Girl* (Boston: H.L. Williams, 1845), held at AAS.

publisher's advertisement printed within *Catharine and Clara*, a fourth book copyrighted by Hill. Federhen's title page, unlike those used by Hill's publications *Adolene Wellmont* and *The Brazen Star*, lacked any text in the black letter style favored in New York. The Boston publisher loaded the title page with text and a single ornamental main line to break up the unattractive grey page.[72]

The promotional text continued the ruse of reporting that *Adolene Wellmont* had written her own autobiography and played up Greenhorn's authorship for both of the other titles. Local readers knew Thompson's work under that *nom de plume*. Federhen's advertisement simplified the type to modern faces instead of drawing attention to each title with expressive ornamental titling fonts, as Hill had done, signaling that Federhen expended less money on composition for the book. Whereas the New York publisher had left out information about the cost of the books, Federhen noted that the publications could be purchased for 15 to 25 cents, depending upon the title ordered. The firm offered to mail the book in the usual manner, including the cost of postage within the price.

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[72] Federhen & Co. gained listings as a bookseller or publication dealer in city directories from 1854 to 1864, with Charles Thacher operating alone from 13 Court St. in 1865. No printers with the last name of Federhen worked in Boston for some time before the formation of the company, although three generations of men in the Federhen family worked as jewelers, starting with Jacob Federhen. John Federhen Jr. and John Federhen III took up the family profession after working, respectively, at a bakery and at a comb business. As jewelers, each worked at separate locations. Metal working skills would have aided a publisher who needed to alter printing plates only slightly while at the same time explaining the non-professional style of the renumbering of pages for *Catharine and Clara*. *Boston City Directories*, 1840-1865; George Thompson [Greenhorn, pseud.], *Catharine and Clara, or The Double Suicide: A True Tale of Disappointed Love* (Boston: Federhen & Co., 1854), Wright *American Fiction Series*, II, 2480. Rather than eliminating plates in order to achieve the correct length for filling out pages in a signature, Federhen rearranged and renumbered them. A simple wood engraved portrait on the recto of a leaf followed instead of preceded the title page, and amateurishly large, centered numbers correctly identified pages six through forty-six, with a publisher advertisement on the recto of the final leaf. The lack of running heads and placement of the numbers may indicate that Federhen received text plates for the book but had to correct them in order to accommodate his lack of corresponding illustrations. Most nineteenth-century publishers placed page numbers to the outside of running heads, making their removal sometimes necessary when illustrations originally printed and numbered with the text block were removed. Boston city directories list several Federhens who may have been the named partner of the firm

The company played a role in George Thompson's efforts to create a persona for himself and to publicize his writing abilities. Federhen & Co. advertised *My Life: or The Adventures of George Thompson*, making sure to connect the author to his "alias Greenhorn" and helping Boston readers to adapt to the transition in thinking of Greenhorn as a local favorite to loyally reading George Thompson, the professional author. Federhen & Co. identified itself as "Boston agents for Harper, Putnam, Godey, Graham, Peterson and Leslie's Magazines," thereby assuring customers that a variety of national publications of repute and wide interest could be obtained on its premises.

The year after Federhen & Co. arranged with George W. Hill to sell Thompson's novels, two of the illustration plates from *Adolene Wellmont* appeared in George C. Holbrook's book, *The Double Suicide*. Holbrook claimed to be author of the novel.[73] Illustrations from the 1853 book of a man who, "finding his French mistress unfaithful to him, casts her off forever, and takes Adolene under his 'protection' " became the 1855 publication's "Maria discovering the deception of her marriage with Knight." Avery's engraving of "Adolene, being a prisoner in the house of old Rawlings, looks forth from the balcony upon the beautiful scenery that surrounds her" in turn migrated to a story requiring art showing "Maria waiting for her lover."

Images transferred from book to book easily through plates, but just as readily by reengraving. English novels by G.W.M. Reynolds offered a rich source of inspiration for American draughtsmen. In perhaps the best example of this borrowing among the books studied, a man leans toward a woman on a parlor couch. A musical instrument lies in the

[73] G.C. Holbrook, *The Double Suicide. The True History of the Lives of the Twin Sisters, Sarah and Maria Williams…* (New-York: G.C.Holbrook, 1855), held at UVA; and G.C. Holbrook, *The Great Brooklyn Tragedy: or Double Suicide of Mr. Horatio N. Gustin, alias Harry Williams, and Sarah Williams, which occurred on the 26th of June, 1855*. The latter may not have been published but was listed in the *Copyright Office Record Books*, LOC.

foreground and a folding screen stands behind the pair. Published with the first series from 1846 to 1848, the illustration made its way into numerous American books. At least two American imprints include the same plate from the printed editions of *The Mysteries of London*, including the image and others in what likely were unauthorized editions.[74] In this new version of the image, the engraver removed the folding screen, simplified the wood panels in the background, changed the expressions of the subjects to be more open and less detailed, and incorporated more solid lines into all areas of shading. Each of these modifications tends to give the appearance of domestic production; they also reduced the time spent on copying the engraving.

The identical plate traveled to other publications in America. The illustration was printed on the verso of the copyright title page for *The Gay Girls* that George W. Hill filed in 1853 in the Southern District of New York. A copy of that book published about the same year placed the illustration in the same location but deleted the publisher's name from the copyright notice. The title page imprint noted *The Gay Girls* as a New York publication but gave no publisher name. Another publisher, George Holbrook, filed for copyright for *The Double Suicide* in the Southern District of New York. He provided a title page deposit that also contained the print on its verso. Likewise, the illustration appeared on the title page verso of *The Double Suicide* published by G.C. Holbrook in 1855. In that copy, the copyright notice was not defaced.[75]

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[74] George W.M. Reynolds, *Life in London* (New York: [s.n.], [184-]); and (New-York: Williams Brothers, 1847). Both held at AAS. A corrosion mark on one of the stereotyped illustrations in the Williams edition suggests that the undated book was printed first. Each book has completely reset type and only shares the illustrations.

[75] *Copyright Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870*, Court of the Southern District of New York (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held at LOC; *The Gay Girls of New York, or Life on Broadway* (New York: [s.n.], 1853), held at UVA; and *The Double Suicide* (1855), held at LOC.

Thompson began asserting his drawing power as an author by separating himself from Hill, who owned the copyright over several of the writer's novels. Like many other writers, Thompson must have weighed the benefits and potential loss in profits from allowing a publisher to manage his work. Early in 1854, he filed for copyright on a German translation of his own book, *Kate Castleton*, which Hill had copyrighted the previous year. Taking advantage of strict definitions of copyright that declared a translation to be a distinct intellectual work, he gained control over *Käthchen Castleton* and turned the publishing over to George C. Holbrook. At the same time, he shifted his allegiance to Preston F. Harris, whose experience included nativist publications. By the end of that year, Harris had begun filing for what would become a string of copyrights over Thompson's novels.[76]

In the 1850s, Thompson became a minor public figure in the sphere of the New York sporting press through the popularity of his books and the controversy he elicited as editor of *The Broadway Belle*. That publication regularly advertised Thompson novels available for purchase, as well as fiction that Ashbee listed. Among those works available from Harris, but not noticed by Ashbee, were books offering medical information.

Throughout 1855, the two men fended off complaints about the indecency of the articles in the newspaper. They may have collaborated together as late as 1858, although their relationship appears to have been contentious.[77] Preston F., or P.F., Harris

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[76] Melissa Homestead looks at the relationship of one particularly famous author-publisher relationship and the copyright implications in "'When I Can Read My Title Clear:' Harriet Beecher Stowe and the *Stowe v. Thomas* Copyright Infringement Case," *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 27 (2002): 201-245. Her forthcoming book, *American Women Authors and Literary Property, 1822-1869* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), offers information on Stowe's unsuccessful attempt to argue against the granting of copyright for translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

[77] The newspaper carried on with several names, including *The Broadway Belle, and Mirror of the Times*; *The Broadway Belle, and New York Shanghai*; and *The Broadway Belle*. Copies of that publication examined are held by AAS, although the New York Public Library and New-York Historical Society also

sometimes appeared on imprints or in newspaper accounts with the middle initial "H," perhaps as part of a conscious attempt to make complaints against his operations more difficult to lodge. Within two years of entering into a highly productive relationship with Harris, Thompson shared his talents with other publications, drawing the author whose career had begun with William Berry in Boston into prominence in the world of New York's indecent publications.

Thompson's move from Boston to New York occurred along a well-traveled path for conveying texts, printing matter, and publications between the two cities. By the late 1850s, publishers in New York could claim dominance in publishing titillating literature. Many publishers in addition to Harris made use of false business names, especially as distributors came to be identified as purveyors of indecent books and prosecutors began grappling with the difficulty of stemming commerce in illicit items. At the same time that American publishers, especially in New York and Boston, began relying more heavily on domestic authors to sustain the growing industry, they took cues from the experience of a prominent pornographer across the Atlantic.

Operating in London from 1840 to the 1860s, William Dugdale dealt in publications both politically and sexually subversive. Implicated in, but not convicted of, being involved in the Cato Street conspiracy, he remained under the watchful eye of authorities and was always subject to having his printing license revoked. Dugdale gained experience in evading prosecution through his marketing methods, through his ability to

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maintain issues. As Reynolds and Gladman point out, Harris and Thompson may have been brought together by their support for George Law, the Know-Nothing Party candidate for president in 1856. See George Thompson, *Venus in Boston*, xxi. Prefatory matter in *The Locket* (New York: P.F. Harris, 1855) praises Law as a guardian of the people. Copies of that book held by AAS and LOC bear gripper marks as well as the printer's mark of Ezra Grossman, a New York firm that advertised its use of steam power presses. Ashbee does not include *The Locket* in his bibliographies, but that book is perhaps the most commonly available Thompson book for which Preston F. Harris took credit.

blackmail prominent men with his knowledge of their illicit activities, and by skillfully suppressing and reviving controversial books in his *oeuvre*.

He developed a series of sham businesses to distance his production of books from the more dangerous distribution of literature to customers. Dugdale's "*modus operandi*, which became standard for owners of pornographic bookshops in London for the next 100 years, was to employ 'front men', both to run the shops, and occasionally to appear as publishers or printers on the title pages of his publications," according to Peter Mendes, who also compares title page typography in determining the origins of clandestine publications. In the 1850s and 1860s, Dugdale listed counterfeit identities, or "fronts," in postal directories.[78]

In the face of increasing pressure against the public display of erotica or its sale, American publishers sometimes shifted attention away from themselves in a similar manner. Others, emboldened by the demand for their books, advertised openly. New York City was home to the major vendors of erotica by the late 1850s, making that city the center of Anthony Comstock's efforts to stamp out obscenity published both clandestinely and in full view.

[78] Peter Mendes, *Clandestine Erotic Fiction in English, 1800-1930: A Bibliographical Study* (Hants, England: Scolar Press, 1993), 421.

Chapter Nine

"Bad Man, Bad Business, Bad Habits, Bad Character…."

> At some time prior to 1840, there landed in this country a man named Haines…. This man was publishing at the time of his death, in 1873, some twenty-five different books.
>
> Another man, named George Ackerman, had published for over twenty-two years prior to his death in 1874, some twenty different books, besides making most beastly transparent cards.
>
> Still another man, named Farrell, published about 109 different books. He had been at it about sixteen years, at the time of his death in 1873.
>
> Then there were some four thousand dealers scattered throughout the country….
>
> — Anthony Comstock (1880)[1]

The arrest records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice offer scarce but valuable information about specific titles, including possible clues to the boundaries between works that he believed could be prosecuted successfully and those that, under the threat of arrest, he could force publishers into withdrawing from sale. Referenced against bibliographical information, the publishers prosecuted by Comstock typically can be identified as reprinters taking part in networks that sold or loaned plates of profitable works. They behaved in a manner consistent with the reprinting mania of the American publishing industry during the 1870s. In the year following the Civil War until about 1890, the publishing industry plunged headlong into intensely competitive sales of cheap books at the same time that moral reformers sought state and federal laws restricting the distribution of indecent books. The pincers of declining economic

[1] Anthony Comstock, *Frauds Exposed; or, How the People are Deceived and Robbed, and Youth Corrupted*, Publication No. 79: Patterson Smith Reprint Series in Criminology, Law Enforcement, and Social Problems (1880; reprint, Montclair, N.J.: Patterson Smith, 1969), 388. Comstock's notoriously poor spelling and variations in George Ackerman's name have been made uniform in this chapter, except in the locations noted.

opportunity and increased risk of prosecution heightened the wariness of publishers about participating in ventures that might be prosecuted.

With an evangelistic flair, Anthony Comstock recorded details about the publishers of indecent books whom he pursued. His arrest ledgers for the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice and his correspondence with postal officials are littered with evocative phrases describing purveyors of obscenity as, alternately, a "shrewd villain," "vilest offender," or "worst case." It is easy to be seduced by his earnest and often one-dimensional depictions of those whom he arrested. Suspects rarely showed remorse for their actions, and their elaborate operations sometimes spanned cities or wove through respectable-looking businesses.

And yet the scale and complexity of the operations against which Comstock campaigned was enormous. New York City became the center of more than the nation's book industry by the middle of the nineteenth century, with illicit literature only a portion of the erotica trade. As Timothy Gilfoyle has noted, antebellum New York became home to prostitution and entertainment districts where women and men engaged in sexualized trades, openly advertising brothel services and performing sexually explicit theatrical acts that brought private vice into public arenas. Within a widespread commerce in sexuality, print supplemented commercial performances as well as material forms, such as microscopic charms, sexual aids, and abortifacients.[2]

The number of "pictures, songs, and books" in New York City before Comstock's campaign was considerable, according the New York Society for the Suppression of

[2] Timothy J. Gilfoyle, *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992). Andrea Tone furthers the study of the "sexualized economy" with a focus on contraceptive entrepreneurialism in *Devices and Desires: A History of Contraceptives in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001).

Vice. Prior to the reformer's initiatives against major producers, more than 400,000 such items circulated in the city at any given time, equaling "enough to place two in every family in the city."[3] Comstock's early efforts, framed within laws that allowed seizure of property and occurring in the midst of a highly unstable business environment, indeed reduced the amount of indecent print.

Comstock often confiscated business records, mined them for the names of further suspects and trade contacts, and destroyed the valuable original evidence. His notoriously illegible handwriting in arrest ledgers makes it difficult for historians to corroborate much of the information that he penned. Separating fact from opinion becomes difficult without comparing the reformer's assertions against external evidence, however. Just seven years after the deaths of the three most active publishers of indecent books in his city, Comstock's propensity for viewing events from his own perspective led him to revise the years of their respective deaths. Haynes, Ackerman, and Farrell indeed held enterprises of the magnitude that Comstock indicated. They died around the times he mentioned, but in each case Comstock estimated demise one year later than it occurred, as if to emphasize the role of the federal and state "Comstock laws" in issuing mortal judgment. Anthony Comstock selected, and sometimes modified, facts to fit his perspective. As in the technical processes overlooked by historians but reconstructed in this dissertation, drawing out from prosecution records the history of those prosecuted requires merging Comstock's documentation with can be learned from the books themselves.

[3] [Anthony Comstock], *The Second Annual Report of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice* (New York: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1876), 6 and 11; and [Anthony Comstock], *The Fourth Annual Report of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice* (New York: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1878), 7 and front cover.

By the early 1870s, most major purveyors of erotica in New York City had been forced from the trade, resulting in a rapid drop in the availability of indecent books. The hostile environment that framed the context in which they dropped out of the trade included an uncertain economy, intense competition among publishers, and the lack of copyright for both imported texts and works considered obscene. William Haynes, George Ackerman, and Jeremiah H. Farrell took advantage of technical advances and marketing possibilities open to other publishers of their day, navigating changing relationships among those in government, their industry, and readers. The deaths of these three men who supplied indecent books across the nation add a note of mystery to any narrative about Comstock's suppression of obscene literature.

Far from George Thompson's glorified "flash" society in which intrepid characters outwitted police and conniving thieves, these publishers inhabited a precarious position as financiers, production coordinators, and distributors of goods in an uncertain industry. Sporadic antebellum obscenity prosecutions, notably in 1853 and 1857, tended to coincide with economic downturns. Publishers of indecent books were particularly susceptible to prosecution when their financial positions were weakest. Perhaps they more aggressively marketed their goods in order to overcome poor sales, thus exposing their operations to greater notice. In common law prosecutions, the public face of an entrepreneur vending objectionable items created an obscene nuisance. These factors help to explain the rise and fall of Frederic A. Brady, whose publishing list as Henry S.G. Smith & Co. became part of Farrell's holdings, before passage of the encompassing Comstock Act and New York's state "little Comstock" law in 1873. Brady died in 1870, two years after New York law approved seizure of property belonging to those

prosecuted but before Comstock in earnest began his campaign against purveyors of indecent literature who mailed their wares.

Comstock boldly tracked the movements of Haynes, Ackerman, and Farrell. He confronted them with law on his side, but he was successful in part because the post-war economic turbulence had pinched their operations and made each man more vulnerable. At the same time that reform efforts heated up in New York, Comstock's lobbying in Washington, D.C., gave indications of success in adding punitive measures and in strengthening existing postal regulations. Comstock never managed to convict any of the three, but he took pride in their removal from the trade. Death served the same end as incarceration. Their nearly simultaneous exit from the city's erotica trade made it easier for Comstock to turn his prosecutorial spotlight on those who remained. The loss of Haynes, Ackerman, and Farrell affected the production networks that each had put into place, forcing communities of printers, binder, and booksellers to turn elsewhere. The fourth publisher upon whom Comstock set his sights has never been identified.

William Haynes

Moral reformers and social observers of the late nineteenth century placed William Haynes, or Haines, at the heart of the growth of American-produced erotica in the nineteenth century. Before 1840, American readers had purchased primarily imported indecent books. Production of such literature on the country's own shores proved to be the key to unlocking pent up demand in the United States. Distributors became the public face of the nation's trade in racy and obscene books, suffering the brunt of pressure from moral reformers and prosecutors. The transformation of illicit texts into material forms,

as much as the growth of readership and the spread of the postal system, underlies the capacity of publishers such as Haynes to create nationwide networks. Demand and distribution must be studied alongside the technologies of production that turned illicit texts into commodities available for purchase.

The elusive Haynes was "the first man who naturalized obscene literature in our country," wrote the author of a nineteenth-century guidebook to New York City. After the ban on imported picture books in the Tariff of 1842, Haynes quickly made his mark supplying the domestic market with American books. Supported by industrial policies that encouraged domestic manufactures and protected from foreign competition by the nation's first national effort to restrict obscenity, Haynes engaged in a profitable enterprise for three decades. By 1871, he was reported to have published at least 320 books "of the most obscene character, which have all had an extensive circulation, and have paid exceedingly well."[4]

Comstock reported that Haynes commenced his specialty in 1842, soon after arriving in America and before the nascent domestic industry began to thrive. Comstock's accusation that Haynes, a surgeon, had fled England in order to escape the disrepute that he had brought upon his wife and her family cannot be readily proven. The new immigrant quickly found opportunities for advancing in love and business, however. He soon married a young Irish woman named Mary and embarked upon a long-lived career publishing indecent books.[5]

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[4] Gustav Lening, *The Dark Side of New York Life and Its Criminal Classes, from Fifth Avenue Down to Five Points* (New York: Frederick Gerhard, 1873), 652.

[5] William Haynes entry, "Report of Persons Arrested under the Auspices of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice for the year 1872," 1-2, Records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, container 1, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Strong demand for illicit publications and the difficulties of importing them from France and England made such books expensive in the United States. This prospect encouraged Haynes, who detected the opportunity that lay within the shortfall in supply. He turned from importing books to manufacturing and arranging the distribution of them himself. From the mid-1840s through the early 1870s, he built up arguably the first American pornography publishing empire.[6]

According to the *National Police Gazette* and court records, Haynes learned early several lessons in avoiding prosecution. Arrested in 1846 on the charge of creating an obscene nuisance with his publishing, William Haynes served a three-month sentence in jail. Over the next several years, he remained under the watchful eyes of prosecutors and the press. He sometimes operated under the name "Piggot," an alias that may have been a play upon Anthony Gavin's well-known anti-clerical work listed by Ashbee as *Le Citateur, Par Pigault-Lebrun*. Reliant upon others to sell his books, he faced implication whenever police questioned distributors. Again, in 1853, police arrested Haynes, prompting him to develop ways to stay out of the sight of law enforcement. Greasing the palms of the city's police became part of his business plan. From just before the Civil War until his death, he is asserted to have paid up to $20,000 to bribe police.[7]

Despite his fame (or infamy), any imprints that might have carried the name of this publisher, whose presence purportedly loomed over illicit literature in the antebellum period, appear to have disappeared. Clandestine books all too often persist only as titles cited by bibliographers such as Henry Spencer Ashbee. They remain ghosts in the historical record, much like Haynes himself. However, Haynes must have been a source

[6] Lening, *Dark Side*, 652.
[7] Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Knopf, 2002), 224-225; and Lening, *Dark Side*, 655.

for many of the titles in *Appendix B* of this dissertation, which lists books noted by Ashbee and for which strong evidence exists of American production rather than mere importation. That appendix brings together recent research about the willingness of publishers to initiate copyright filings and the titles for which New York vendors were arrested for obscenity.[8]

From his start in the early 1840s publishing *Fanny Hill*, Haynes expanded his business to supplying the domestic title *Cecile Martin* and reprints of explicit works from abroad, such as *The Curtain Drawn Up* and *La Rose D'Amour*. An indictment in the 1850s that appears not to have resulted in proceedings noted his complicity in the sale of *The Confessions of a Voluptuous Young Lady of High Rank*. He presumably supplied the books sold by Albert Gazeley and others arrested for having or selling obscene books, thus creating a nuisance to the public. Nevertheless, neither Haynes's name nor variant spellings of it can be identified on imprints cataloged by OCLC or in major national collections. This is all the more noteworthy because moral reformers and historians of sexuality uniformly have reported Haynes to be the first producer of pornographic books in the United States.

Even in death, Haynes seemed larger than life to his contemporaries. The night before he was to be arrested by the determined Anthony Comstock in 1872, Haynes died, many thought by his own hand. The truth may be more mundane. Although Haynes remained a force in New York's erotica publishing world, the rise of a new generation of younger men, like George Ackerman and Jeremiah Farrell, who aggressively marketed

[8] The author is indebted to Donna I. Dennis for providing information about specific prosecutions of Haynes and the following publishers in New York County during the 1850s and 1860s. That information will be published as "New York City, Obscenity Regulation, and the Creation of American Erotica, 1820-1880" (Ph.D. Dissertation, History, Princeton University, 2005).

their books, seems to have pushed him somewhat to the side. In his seventies, he was an elderly man with a history of heart problems who may have succumbed to the stress of his desperate situation. Whether confirming the actual cause of death or assisting the family in concealing Haynes's suicide, the coroner ruled his death the result of a coronary weakness, with the contributing factor of kidney disease.[9]

Haynes remains difficult to locate even in his final resting place. Listed on his death certificate as a bookkeeper who resided in New York for twenty-five years, he was reportedly buried on March 12, 1872, at Calvary Cemetery. His name and variants of it do not appear on an extensive roster of all readable tombstones for that location, however. Popular lore asserts that he was interred within the fashionable gates of Greenwood Cemetery, but the truth of this also proves just as difficult to trace.[10] The historical records of the famed Brooklyn cemetery contain no plot purchased for any member of the Haynes family before 1873, and the cemetery's current records list no grave with his name. Just as he carefully ensured that his name did not appear on the imprints that he issued, William Haynes, or those acting on his behalf, guaranteed that the mystery about his personal life would remain after his death.[11]

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[9] Death Certificate for William Haynes, Brooklyn Death Certificate #2201-3625 (1872), Kings County, New York Municipal Archives. Numerous medical commentaries of the era note albumena in relation to "Bright's disease" or bladder infections that contributed to kidney damage.

[10] "The most beautiful cemetery of the city of New York, and the place where its people most long to sleep when 'life's fitful fever' is over, is Greenwood," wrote James D. McCabe, Jr., in *Lights and Shadows of New York Life; or, the Sights and Sensations of the Great City* (1872; reprint, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), 390.

[11] Death Certificate for William Haynes, Brooklyn #2201-3625,1872; Rosemary Muscarella Ardolina, *Old Calvary Cemetery: New Yorkers Carved in Stone* (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, Inc., 1996); and *Green-Wood Cemetery. Supplemental Catalogue of Proprietors, to May 12, 1873* (Brooklyn: Eagle Printing, 1873). The plot records of Greenwood Cemetery are accessible to the public at the cemetery office in Brooklyn. All existing records have been input into a searchable database available through kiosks at that location. Haynes's plot could not be located in that database or through a physical examination of monuments in areas open for burials in the early 1870s.

Details about his business can be pieced together in light of American publishing practices of his day, however. Haynes plied his trade with enormous success until the early 1870s, yet he did so quietly. Though reportedly a resident of the state of New York for twenty-five years, he only rarely was listed in city directories. During his residency in Brooklyn and New York, no book-related occupations can be connected to him. Brooklyn directories list an agent named William Haines in the late 1860s living next door to the house where the publisher died in 1872, indicating that Haynes may have been advertising discretely.[12]

In the last year of William Haynes's life, his operations spanned at least three cities. Printing took place in Brooklyn, the city in which he resided; bindery work occurred in New York City; and stock was stored at a hotel in Jersey City. Haynes coordinated moving letterpress sheets from Brooklyn to John Ulm, a binder paid ten cents per book during the year or more he worked for Haynes. Ulm picked up the materials at the corner of Beekman and Nassau instead of at his office at Avenue A and Sixth Street. The handoff point was deep in the heart of New York's illicit printing area. Booksellers, printers, and publishers who specialized in indecent titles conducted business openly on nearby Nassau and Ann streets.

In turn, Ulm farmed out work to at least one other binder, another German Jew who, like Ulm, was middle aged and with children. That contractor, Riehl, worked at night out of his home on the fifth floor of a tenant house on East Fifth Street. He sewed

[12] *Brooklyn City Directories*, published under the following names between 1846-1847 and 1889-1890: *Brooklyn Directory and Yearly Advertiser, Hearnes' Brooklyn City Directory, Smith's Brooklyn City Directory, Hope & Henderson's Consolidated Brooklyn Directory, Brooklyn City Directory, Brooklyn Directory*, and *Lain's Brooklyn Directory*. This group is subsequently referred to as *Brooklyn City Directories*.

Haynes' books after coming home from his daytime bindery job. Ulm hired a local express company to transport the bound books to Jersey City for storage.

Within the production circle that Comstock noted, only the publisher's "confidential man" served time in prison. James McDermott, a young Irishman, ran a small secondhand bookstore at 75 Nassau St. In the tiny shop in which he did business under the alias of "Hines & Co.", McDermott packed in books, catalogues, stereoscopic views, photos, and watch pictures. Comstock seized many of the items as evidence.

Revised in 1868, New York state laws allowed any machinery or materials used for the manufacture of obscene goods to be destroyed. Comstock's eagerness to document the justification for taking advantage of this power confirms the breadth of Haynes's operations. Finally warned to "get out of the way" by police who recognized Comstock's determination to pursue Haynes, the publisher was found dead next door to his only known address of 52 Balcher St. Mary, his wife, played an active role in running the family business from its beginning and after his death.[13]

In the month after Haynes' death, Comstock expropriated a half ton of letterpress stock from Ulm. Just days earlier, Mary Haynes had removed plates and most of the stock, leaving only a fraction for Comstock to find. Another half ton of letterpress and 200,000 obscene pictures were taken from Riehl's fifth-floor room that month, and investigators found with McDermott a steel plate believed to belong to Haynes.[14]

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[13] Regarding the role of Mary Haynes, caution should be used with information provided by Comstock. Perhaps accepting the woman at her word upon inquiring about her age, the age he reported for her would have made her only in her early forties upon her husband's death – or less than twelve years old in 1842 when Haynes's publishing business began. See Mary E. Haynes entry, "Report of Persons Arrested… 1872," 1-2, container 1. It is possible that the Mary E. Haines that Farrell arrested was actually Susan M. Haines, widow of William, who appeared in Brooklyn city directories from 1876 to 1880.

[14] William Haynes entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1872," 1-2, container 1; *Brooklyn City Directories*; *New York City Directories*; Death Certificate for William Haynes, Brooklyn #2201-3625,1872.

Stopping by the Haynes household to make sure that the good widow wasn't carrying on her husband's operations, Comstock arrived in time to see an express wagon loaded with stereotype plates maneuvering to the backdoor of the house. He took into custody the wagon and its contents, commandeering $30,000 worth of plates. Ever honest, he reimbursed Mary Haynes $450, or about the value of 5,000 pounds of stereotype plate metal sold as scrap.[15] Comstock claimed to have destroyed twenty-four cases of stereotype plates and up to one hundred and ninety steel and copper engravings for printing twenty to twenty-two separate titles.[16]

Steel plates allowed Haynes to print large runs of illustrations. During the 1870s, many so-called steel plates were actually illustrations carved into copper, a more malleable metal, then coated with steel to make the impression surface harder. With this readily available technology, Haynes's ability to reprint items would have been virtually limitless. The onlay could be changed without damaging the underlying copper engraving. Completely copper plates would have been used for reprints with limited runs, due to the softer nature of that metal.

Another clue to his operations is that letterpress and engravings cannot be printed together but require separate printing. A relief process, letterpress printing requires type to stand above the plate. An inked plate crushes ink onto paper. In the intaglio process, steel engravings trap ink in their grooves. The cut away areas, rather than the areas standing highest, are printed. Doing this requires techniques such as greater pressure on

[15]Heywood Broun and Margaret Leech, *Anthony Comstock: Roundsman of the Lord* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1927), 97; and Theodore Low De Vinne, *The Printer's Price List*, intro. Irene Tichenor (1871; reprint, New York: Garland Publishing, 1980), 430.

[16] Broun and Leech noted the materials in the wagon as stereotype plates, a general term for either stereotype or electrotype plates of the period. Unless specifically described as steel or copper plates, materials were probably stereotyped or electrotyped.

the plate and better quality paper capable of bending into the grooves without rupturing. This difference indicates that the plates would have been used for printing playing cards or illustrations to be inserted into books. The letterpress text pages of a book could be printed on a lesser quality paper to save money. Haynes would have had to have worked with multiple printers or at least one large firm familiar with both processes.

Haynes appears not to have operated a retail outlet himself, or at least not one in the metropolitan area in which he lived during the 1860s and at the time of his death. Haynes maneuvered around state and local pressures against obscene literature by splitting production into multiple locations, moving stock away from his business office and giving his vendors anonymity but large profits for completing work. He also bribed police liberally. Each of these strategies was common among publishers of indecent books through the early 1870s.[17]

The lack of surviving imprints that can be linked to Haynes is a testament to how vulgar his works were perceived to be in that day.[18] He did not file for copyright under his own name in Boston, New York City, or Philadelphia as part of protecting his claim to the works he published for the three decades during which he operated, although he reportedly wrote at least some of the works that he published.[19]

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[17] Lening, *Dark Side*, 653-654.

[18] The most promising leads to date are imprints of Miller, Haynes & Co., dealing with hygiene, health, and sexuality topics. Eli P. Miller and his wife ran a Turkish bath in Brooklyn during the 1860s and 1870s. Books published by Miller, Haynes & Co. include: Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow, *The Injurious Influences of the Schools*, trans. John P. Jackson (New York: 1871); Mrs. E.P. Miller, *A Mother's Advice* (New York: 1870); and Eli P. Miller, *The Improved Turkish Bath* (New York: 1870), *Dyspepsia* (New York: 1870), and *Vital Force* (New York: 1869).

[19] *Copyright Record Books of the District Courts, 1790-1870* (Washington, D.C.: United States Copyright Office), held at LOC. Haynes's name does not appear in indexes for 1840-1870 in the courts of the District of Massachusetts, Southern District of New York, and Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Additionally, the on-line and on-site catalogs for major research collections in the United States were searched extensively.

The anonymity of large-scale production in different locations, along with using express companies for deliveries, tends to imply that he supplied the trade rather than dealt directly with customers. Without the record books that Comstock appears to have confiscated, it is difficult to learn more about his business strategies without relying heavily either upon Comstock's arrest records or Gustav Lening, the author of *The Dark Side of New York Life*. Haynes is reported to have been one of only two American producers of French playing cards, in addition to leading the nation in offering "the cheaper class of obscene literature."[20]

George Ackerman

Publishers like Haynes were central to the growth of commercial erotica during the nineteenth century. Those who operated at less of a distance from the public, like George Ackerman, still prove elusive. With their business records seized and often destroyed by prosecutors, few clues about their illicit publishing activity remain. Those facts that are available are sometimes difficult to reconcile within a maze through which the other paths of publishers enter and exit.

Credit reports from R.G. Dun and Company from the 1850s identify a "George Akerman" as bookbinder, publisher, and wine seller. Prior to the early 1850s, he moved from New Hampshire to Boston in order to learn the trade of bookbinding. New York offered opportunity to the young man, and he briefly attempted business there before taking about $3,000 dollars to the bustling city of Cincinnati. He continued his career as part of Akerman & Burgess, publishing cheap books, according to a credit agent. The partnership dissolved soon after. Burgess went on to become a partner in Burgess &

[20] Lening, *Dark Side*, 652.

Garrett in New York, and Ackerman turned to bookbinding in that city. Ackerman also published more items of the same description in his next partnership with "Orms."[21]

Through his publishing activities, George Ackerman fed the interest of readers in urban crime stories and anti-immigrant publications. Without copyrighting his material, he published city mystery books by Ned Buntline and a nativist periodical. With Thomas Ormsby, a publisher named "Akarman" issued *The Mysteries and Miseries of New Orleans* in 1851, connecting his publications to the famous Buntline, the pen name for Edward Z.C. Judson, writer of some of the country's most popular city mysteries at mid-century and after the Civil War. Buntline's action-filled plots and nativist themes had enduring appeal, making for a ready market. "Akarman and Ormsby" promoted the novel as being the last work by that author.[22]

The two men soon split their partnership, but Thomas Ormsby stayed in the publishing arena. In late 1850s, he offered a number of explicit books to readers. Police found him selling *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, *The Curtain Drawn Up, Life and*

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[21] George Akerman credit report, 268, 554 (Sept. 29, 1852-Oct. 12, 1853), R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School, Boston, Mass. Active from 1841 to 1890, R.G. Dun and its predecessors played a major role in the rise of credit reporting as a tool of business evaluation in America. See Florence Bartoshesky, "Dun Credit Ledgers at Baker Library," *The Book 3* (1984): 5-6; James D. Norris, *R.G. Dun & Co., 1841-1900: The Development of Credit-Reporting in the Nineteenth Century* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978); and James Madison, "The Evolution of Commercial Credit-Reporting in Nineteenth-Century America," *Business History Review* 48 (1974): 167-168. On Burgess, see "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," 49, part 1, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, ed. Peter Dzwonkoski (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1986), 120; and Madeleine B. Stern, ed., *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth Century America* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980), 101-103.

[22] Like several other publishers of indecent books, these publishers associated themselves with Judson's style and name to capture the steady sales that the author's new works generated and to create markets for their semi-erotic fiction books. Boston story papers in the late 1840s, followed quickly by New York publishers, seized upon Judson's draw among readers. Judson wrote *The Last Days of Callao; or, The Doomed City of Sin!* for readers of Justin Jones's *Star Spangled Banner* in 1847. His sea novels, in particular, remained popular for years. In the summer of 1847, F. Gleason copyrighted Buntline's *The Black Avenger of the Spanish Main*, and two decades later, Frederic A. Brady copyrighted *Clarence Rhett, or the Cruise of the Privateer*, written under the author's actual name of Zane. For extensive analysis of city mystery novels, see Paul J. Erickson, "Welcome to Sodom: The Cultural Work of City-Mysteries Fiction in Antebellum America," Ph.D. Dissertation, American Studies, University of Texas, 2005.

Adventures of Silas Shovewell, as well as other titles. Arrested and indicted, he appears to have escaped conviction.[23]

Ormsby continued in the business but toned down the titles and descriptions of his books in at least one advertisement. From his location at 84 Nassau St. in 1861, and perhaps earlier, he marketed his books and a variety of goods to both sexes, the married and unmarried, and to novices as well as veteran readers (fig. 9.1).[24] Packaging some of his books as physiological and self-instruction literature, he addressed the curiosity of both sexes and of different classes of customers. His clothbound volumes, priced at 50 cents to one dollar, came in respectable forms. Excerpts from classical authors and anecdotes written by Lola Montez, the celebrated (and notorious) dancer, merited more upscale packaging.

The worth of his texts as sexual instruction is debatable. Ormsby carried *Aristotle's Complete Masterpiece*, describing it as "the most extraordinary work on Physiology ever published," as well as books with model letters for winning the favors of a loved one. He also carried books costing from thirteen cents to one dollar, most with illustrations and several cited as including steel engravings.[25]

Ormsby assured potential buyers that each of his books featured solid bindings, and that the new editions were illustrated with colored plates. Additionally, he promised customers a hand-picked selection of items at prices at least as cheap as those purchased in person. Among the goods available, he noted, were law books and printing papers, gloves and guns, jewelry and silver plated ware, and fancy goods and sporting articles.

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[23] Dennis, "New York City."
[24] "Thomas Ormsby's Commission Bureau and General Purchasing Agency," [New York], [1861], BDSDS 1861, AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society.
[25] "Ormsby's Commission Bureau."


THOMAS ORMSBY'S
Commission Bureau and
GENERAL PURCHASING AGENCY,
84 Nassau Street, New-York.
MERCHANDISE OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.
THE MARRIAGE BED;
WOMAN'S FORM;
ADVICE TO HUSBANDS & WIVES.
THE WEDDING NIGHT;
THE LOVE ORACLE;
THE DICTIONARY OF LOVE.
ANECDOTES OF LOVE.
ARTS OF BEAUTY;
THE LAWS OF LOVE.
THOMAS ORMSBY.

Fig. 9.1. Thomas Ormsby circular (1861)

He promised to fulfill the desires of "those wishing many articles that can only be procured in New York City" by mailing or shipping to addresses in the United States or Canada. Acting as a general merchandiser allowed Ormsby to sell his books more discretely to distant locations. He could place publications within shipments of items that ordinary Americans might want to purchase from urban supply houses.[26]

Ackerman cashed in his portion of the business with Ormsby and joined Garrett & Co. The named partner seems to have been Ransom Garrett, whose firm of the same name did a good business in games and novels from 18 Ann St. By 1852, Ackerman had left that firm and, supposedly, the field of publishing. Like Ormsby, he began to explore non-publishing business opportunities through which he could disguise his bookselling. After having acquired substantial experience in publishing, a financial relationship with a liquor dealer drew him into the business of selling wines and other products, according to

[26] "Ormsby's Commission Bureau."

a Dun reporter. A "smart shrewd man," the erstwhile publisher reported his new business at 216 Pearl to be worth $10,000, and he showed no interest in selling.[27]

His fortune changed within the year, however. In the eyes of a credit reporter, the publisher who had been "easy in his finances" had gained unsavory associations. By the spring of 1853, he could no longer be trusted. Neither could he be found by that fall at his new address 106 Water.[28] For the next several years, Ackerman gave conflicting information in city directories, misspelled his last name, and possibly changed his first name. He appears to have worked from locations on William and Nassau, parallel streets in the heart of the erotica printing district.[29]

Somewhat more about George Ackerman's production and marketing strategies can be learned from his imprints. In 1854, under the name of Akarman, he edited *True-American*, a weekly nativist newspaper published during the 1850s in New York. With a business partner named Picton, he published the newspaper in major cities on the East Coast, as well as in New York.

If the weekly newspaper was, indeed, "Published simultaneously in New-York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore" as it advertised itself to be, its production and distribution necessitated coordination. Such a feat required either shipment by express of the printed sheets to periodical depots outside of the central printing location or the

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[27] Stern, ed., *Publishers for Mass Entertainment*, 101. Garrett went on to be part of Garrett, Dick & Fitzgerald, a firm that, after his retirement, remained with the two other men in association. Dick & Fitzgerald became a major publisher of reprints and inexpensive, popular volumes. See also Akerman credit report, R.G. Dun and Co. Collection, Baker Library.

[28] Akerman credit report, R.G. Dun and Co. Collection, Baker Library.

[29] A bookbinder named G. Akarman worked at 181 William St. in the year that he disappeared from the credit report. Most certainly, George Ackerman was the publisher listed under his own name at 82 Nassau, while sharing the premises with F. Brady & Co. in 1853. Then in 1856, a publisher called George Akerman had an office at 167 William before relocating the next year to 14 Frankfort while keeping a residence in Brooklyn. Although it is possible that Akarman, Ackerman, and Akerman are three different people, the overlapping details of their operations and associations with other publishers of popular books makes it most likely that the entries were, in fact, a ploy to direct attention away from himself. See *New York City Directories*.

delivery of plates to a printing contact in each city. Electrotyping allowed publishers to create multiple plates from the same original setting of type, but only exceptionally fast demand or urgently needed material induced a publisher to pay for multiple plating. A newspaper would have met those guidelines.[30]

While doing business, Ackerman came into possession of material that had passed through William Berry. Through an ornament in a publisher's advertisement, Berry can be linked to the transformation of W.L. Bradbury's *The House Breaker* into *Anna Mowbray*, which bore the false imprint of Henry R.J. Barkley and eventually a wrapper of George Ackerman. The two books were identical in text, except for an added introduction with tongue-in-cheek references to the main character Henry Stuart as "The House Breaker" and the alteration of Boston streets and settings at the beginning of the tale to those appropriate for New York. The compositor left a variable amount of space blank before each chapter, perhaps to make up for an error in casting off and to space out the text to fill the entire forty-eight pages. A short epilogue titled "Conclusion" neatly sewed up events, squeezing the text in smaller type on the bottom half of the final page.[31]

Only a remnant survives of *Anna Mowbray*, and those first six leaves likely were a twelve-page advance issue rather than the complete first gathering of that book. A small portion of an ornamental frame for a publisher's advertisement on the inside back cover remains visible in the copy of *Anna Mowbray* reproduced in the Wright *American Fiction*

[30] Akarman is the same New York publisher who, as George Ackerman, filed for copyright as proprietor on *The Maid of Seville, A Romance of the Spanish Inquisition* on October 3, 1854, written by Henry Quake (or Quaker). He failed to deposit a copy to complete his application. Ackerman, aka Akarman and Akerman, appears only infrequently in city directories. Copyright Right Registers, Court of the Southern District of the State of New York, Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[31] George Thompson, *The House Breaker: or, The Mysteries of Crime* (Boston: W.L. Bradbury, 1848), available through Wright's *American Fiction* Series, I, 2584. *The House Breaker* was signed as four gatherings of six leaves, with small errors in signing or chapter headings, and lacking the customary rule between the two columns. On the title page, a short quotation from Shakespeare ended with the Bard's name spelled "Shakspeare."

Series microfilm. Its design is that of a segmented type frame used in Willis Little publisher advertisements and in later wrappers for Berry's publications, suggesting that Berry may have been involved in the production of the revision for a New York locale.

A wrapper of *Anna Mowbray* seen by Ashbee listed James Ramerio as a source of the publication.[32] That fictitious name was another of the businesses under which New York erotica entrepreneur George Ackerman sold his goods. Ashbee also listed a James Ramerio wrapper attached to a copy of *Venus in Boston*, a text originally published by William Berry. Without a physical copy of that version of *Venus in Boston*, it is impossible to tell whether William Berry's actual plates were transferred to New York.

A large underground network of vendors supplied publications from and through New York before the Civil War. Even if Berry's original printing matter was not acquired, he appears to have taken part in an exchange system among publishers of indecent books as late as 1857. An advertisement in the April 11, 1857, issue of *Life in Boston and New York* presented a list of works including *Fashion and Famine*, *Jack Harold*, *[Adventures of a] Pickpocket*, *New York in Slices*, and *Seducer's Fate*. Rather than Paul de Kock, the paper listed books by "Charles Paul deKock." Books ascribed to him included *Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty-Five*, *Tales by Twilight*, *History of a Rake*, and *The Misteries of Venus, or Lessons of Love*. At least three of the items under that author's name in the advertisement appeared in New York indictments or affidavits filed during a crackdown on obscene nuisances that same year.[33]

The Cheap Book Mart at 29 School St. in Boston offered many of the publications that became part of the inventory sold by George Ackerman. Numerous physiological

[32] Ashbee, *Catena Librorum Tacendorum*, 219.
[33] "Books for the Million," *Life in Boston and New York* (April 11, 1857); Dennis, "New York City."

works, from those of Hollick to LaCroix, yet could be purchased by the married or unmarried for their edification. Operating under the fictitious name of Abel Head, Berry or an associate made it possible for readers to satisfy "every variety of taste" while being sure that their items would be shipped discretely and postage paid. Some must have been procured by exchange with other publishers, others by wholesale purchase from New York vendors, and yet more appear to have migrated from Berry to different firms, both as plates and as pirated texts. In having his work appropriated by George Ackerman, Berry came into the circle of one of the more important erotica producers of his day, as well as one who offered a model for clandestine operations.[34]

Issues of *Venus' Miscellany* aid further in tying together the "fronts" used by George Ackerman. An issue of that publication dated Jan. 31, 1857, listed James Ramerio, or a partnership with that name, as the contact for purchasers or potential writers for the newspaper. Advertisements cited Jean Rosseau, another name through which Ackerman did business, as an importer of sexual lifestyle commodities such as condoms. Operating out of a post office box gave greater privacy to the publishers, but occasionally the printing of a physical address established connections among the business names. *Venus' Miscellany* listed Jean Rosseau's address as the same location occupied by George Ackerman around 1856.[35]

Ramerio's name appeared on at least one other wrapper during the same period. A surviving copy of *Flora Montgomerie,* a novel based on the seduction of a Lowell factory girl by a local mill owner, features Ramerio's name on a two-color cover. The title page

[34] "Books for the Million."
[35] *Venus' Miscellany* 1, no. 12 (Jan. 31, 1857).

attributed the 1856 novel to "George Akarman" of 167 William Street.[36] A sloppily cut block for a red overlay detracted from the wood engraving of a topless woman reclining on an oyster shell-like bed, with leafy vines creeping around the sides of the illustration. Cut outs in the engraving made room for an oval advertising the books as one of the "newest and best C. Paul de Kocks," with the title misspelled as *Flora Montgomery*. Ashbee linked an author named Sparks to the book.

The black-and-red illustration on the cover of became a trademark of sorts, with either Ackerman or another publisher having the reclining woman and the frame's open spaces recut for a work advertised as a Paul de Kock novel. A reengraved and reversed version of the illustration became the wrapper for *New York Life* (fig. 9.2).[37] An enterprising publisher overprinted the fictitious imprint of Charles S. Atwood at 24 Ann St. on both the wrapper and the title page, combining a presumed Ackerman alias with the address of Frederic A. Brady from 1859 through part of 1864.[38]

It seems plausible that Brady and Ackerman collaborated in the 1850s. In an initial brush with the law in 1857, Ackerman turned to his printing acquaintances for bail and escaped with a $50 fine. The extent of his business quickly became known, however. When Ackerman's stock was seized during a further sweep of his premises, an unnamed business associate came forward to claim the de Kock materials. That person might have been Brady, who as early as 1853 shared Ackerman's business location.[39]

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[36] Sparks, *Flora Montgomerie* (New York: George Akarman, 1856), held at American Museum of Textile History.
[37] [George Thompson], *New York Life; or, The Mysteries of Upper-Tendom Revealed (*New York: Charles S. Atwood, 1849?), held at AAS.
[38] "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," 49, part 1, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 64.
[39] Horowitz, *Rereading Sex,* 241-242.

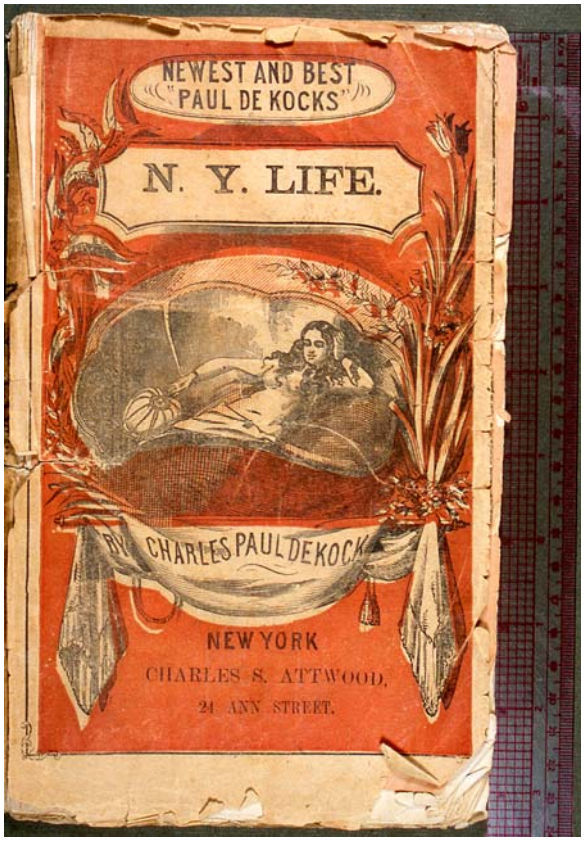


Fig. 9.2. *New York Life* (1849?)

During the 1860s, Ackerman vended a variety of goods associated with the sporting life, especially in the manufacture of gambling cards with sexually suggestive designs and a continuing supply of books. Yet he seems to have become worn down over time by his trade. A married father of five, he must have juggled his increasingly dangerous vocation and the need to provide for a large family. Draft riots in New York during the Civil War were part of, and gave voice to, an increasingly violent undercurrent in that city, especially in the "flash" society where criminals, working-class men, and destitute women plying desperate trades mingled.

After the war, moral reform efforts and lobbying the state legislature in New York heated up, resulting in state laws in 1868 and their strengthening in 1873 that brought

more attention to publishers of indecent books. They, and any manufacturers or tradesmen printing books deemed obscene, risked their capital investment if caught. As the industry shifted from Adams power presses to more expensive cylinder presses, in part because of the cost advantages of low-paid women's labor in bindery tasks, printers became even more aware of the danger of losing their equipment and press materials, as well a social standing if their involvement were uncovered.

Under pressure from Anthony Comstock, in 1871 Ackerman relinquished at least some of his printing materials and averred that he had quit the trade. He escaped arrest momentarily, but he may have resumed his business until convinced that he could not escape prosecution. Vendors prosecuted in the 1850s and 1860s by and large escaped conviction except for those who pled guilty. By the early 1870s, the ability of publishers to take advantage of the informal protection provided by loyalty to fellow tradesmen, blackmail of prominent men, and bribes to police began to diminish. A reorganized New York police force less subject to graft, a determined reformer who pursued publishers under both state and federal jurisdictions, and the unstable loyalties of associates in the murky underworld of gambling, prostitution, and obscene publishing pressed upon Ackerman. Within the year, he had died.

From a man on the make to an exhausted entrepreneur, Ackerman's death left a void among New York's networks of erotica. His demise preceded that of Jeremiah H. Farrell, a third major dealer. Frederic A. Brady bridged the operations of Ackerman and Farrell, perhaps as an informal partner with the former and in the sale of plates from Henry S.G. Smith & Co., Brady's alias, to Farrell.

Frederic A. Brady

George Ackerman knew Frederic A. Brady in 1853 or earlier, through the continual crossing of their business addresses during the shadowy beginnings of each man's publishing career in New York. They shared an early association at 82 Nassau St., and in the early 1860s, Brady occupied 24 Ann St., which was the location given for undated Charles S. Atwood publications. Ackerman may have been the route through which Brady became involved in clandestine publishing.[40]

In 1852 or 1853, Frederic, or Frances, Brady began selling books in New York City as F. Brady & Co. on Nassau before moving to 12 Ann St. After apparently making a good profit from his work, he suffered financial losses around the time of the Panic of 1857 and into the following year. During a sweep of the city's illicit literature vendors that occurred at the same time, authorities announced that Brady was the man behind Henry S.G. Smith & Co., a well known imprint for indecent books. Under that name or as H.S.G. Smith & Co., he published *Memoirs of a Man of Pleasure* and *The Adventures of a French Bedstead*, which had been published earlier by William Dugdale in England. He also carried new novels by George Thompson, such as *Fanny Greeley*.[41]

His operations seemed to spread out from New York to other cities and, in the manner of an established member of the printing industry, to follow standard copyright practices. A novel titled *Kate Hastings* carried an 1856 copyright notice from the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, identifying a filer named Eustace Herman & Co. as the holder. No publisher imprint appeared on the title page, but Henry S.G. Smith & Co. took

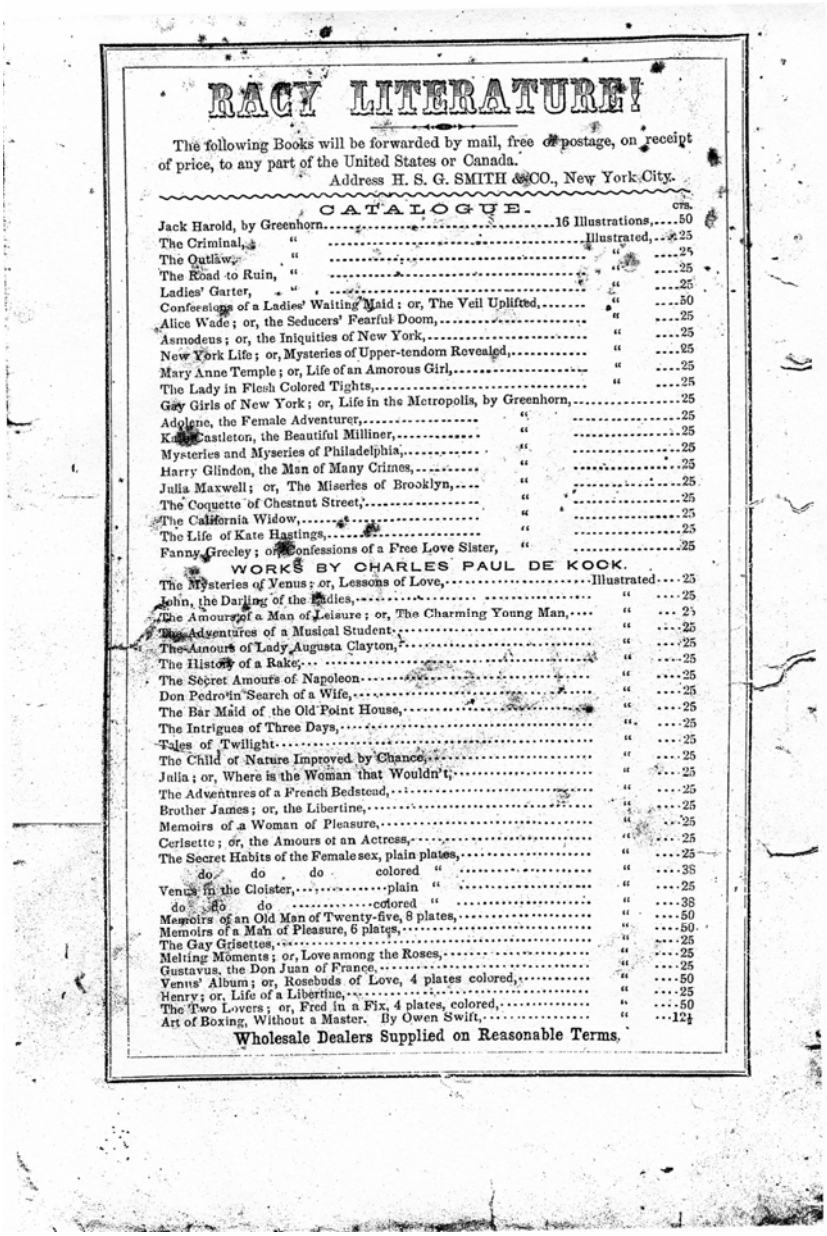
[40] See *New York City Directories*, 1853-1857.
[41] Ashbee reported that Henry S.G. Smith was an American imprint of William Dugdale, but that may have merely been a generous way of noting that an American firm had begun pirating the London publisher's list as a guide for works to sell in the United States. See Ashbee, *Catena Librorum Tacendorum*, 121-122, 149-150, and 210. See also Dennis, "New York City."

responsibility for the book on the front cover and in publisher advertisements printed on the yellow wrappers.[42]

Despite first appearances that he operated on his own, Brady took part in a larger network. The name of Henry S.G. Smith & Co. on the front cover appears lighter, as if it were an overprint on prepared wrappers. Brady could have added his own firm's name to pre-printed wrappers, but it is more likely that he inserted a correction to an existing plate for the cover. He then printed the remainder of the wrapper with his own advertisements, making the novel into a creation of Henry S.G. Smith & Co. That strategy would have retained the striking but simple illustration on the front cover in which Kate Hastings, the tragic heroine of one of the stories comprising the novel, turned slightly to stare directly though dispassionately at those who viewed her. Henry S.G. Smith & Co. must have absorbed or rented that plate from another firm, possibly as part of acquiring the set from which the book could be printed.[43]

Similarly, Brady's company came into control of key titles from William Berry's holdings. The advertisement for Henry S.G. Smith & Co. in *Figure 9.3* shows a combination of titles from the publishing lists of Berry and Brady, as well as many of the titles for which Arthur Crown was arrested during that decade in New York. The list generally descends to racier fare as the reader's eyes move down the page, finally landing upon the familiar title of *Art of Boxing*. Catering to those who could afford only the cheapest reading and, perhaps, to encourage potential buyers to perceive reading novels

[42] Amy Morton, *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings; Being a Complete History of Her Eventful Life and Melancholy Death in the Charitable Hospital, Paris*. (New York: Henry S.G. Smith, [185- or 186-]); held at AAS. The information above is that on the wrapper, with dating by this author. The bibliographically correct title, according to the text block, is *Kate Hastings; or, The Life and Death of a Woman of Fashion and Pleasure*.
[43] Morton, *Kate Hastings*.



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The Amours of Lady Augusta Clayton,	"	25
The History of a Rake,	"	25
The Secret Amours of Napoleon,	"	25
Don Pedro in Search of a Wife,	"	25
The Bar Maid of the Old Point House,	"	25
The Intrigues of Three Days,	"	25
Tales of Twilight,	"	25
The Child of Nature Improved by Chance,	"	25
Julia; or, Where is the Woman that Wouldn't,	"	25
The Adventures of a French Bedstead,	"	25
Brother James; or, the Libertine,	"	25
Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,	"	25
Cerisette; or, the Amours of an Actress,	"	25
The Secret Habits of the Female sex, plain plates,	"	25
do do do colored "	"	38
Venus in the Cloister, plain "	"	25
do do do colored "	"	38
Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty-five, 8 plates,	"	50
Memoirs of a Man of Pleasure, 6 plates,	"	50
The Gay Grisettes,	"	25
Melting Moments; or, Love among the Roses,	"	25
Gustavus, the Don Juan of France,	"	25
Venus' Album; or, Rosebuds of Love, 4 plates colored,	"	50
Henry; or, Life of a Libertine,	"	25
The Two Lovers; or, Fred in a Fix, 4 plates, colored,	"	50
Art of Boxing, Without a Master. By Owen Swift,	"	12½

Wholesale Dealers Supplied on Reasonable Terms.

Fig. 9.3. Henry S.G. Smith & Co. publisher advertisement (185- or 186-)

as a masculine activity, the book sold for just 12-1/2 cents through Henry S.G. Smith & Co., as it had through Berry. [44]

Arthur Crown pled guilty and served a suspended sentence, and a street peddler arrested with the same stock had his case dismissed after promising to cease vending such

[44] Dennis, "New York City"; and Morton, *Kate Hastings*.

works. With those distributors cooperating with authorities, it was only a matter of time before investigators identified the entrepreneur behind Henry S.G. Smith & Co. In the opening month of 1858, Frederic Brady sat in jail awaiting trial, unable to pay bond due to his financial straits. A credit agent remarked that Brady's experience in the Tombs and of having his stock confiscated were reverses that he might not be able to overcome. Brady also was a widower with children dependent upon his livelihood, and the Dun agent may have chosen to refer obliquely not only to his time in jail but perhaps also to a lingering personal grief.[45]

Although apparently not convicted, the public exposure nevertheless seems to have wrought a change in the publisher. That same spring, Brady altered the firm's name to Frederic A. Brady & Co., personalizing his business and making his ownership transparent. In May of 1858, he purchased printing materials from H. Long & Bros., a popular reprint house, and took over their premises. It is hard to imagine how Brady paid cash to become successor to the firm just months after sitting in jail for want of surety unless the stock seized by police comprised only a portion of his materials. The sale of valuable Henry S.G. Smith & Co. plates or publications no doubt funded his renaissance in 1858. In 1863, he sold a large number of those plates to Jeremiah H. Farrell, showing his depth of stock.[46]

His new firm supplied readers with books by prominent adventure novel authors such as Ned Buntline, Justin Jones, and J.H. Ingraham, as well as numerous satirical, entertainment, and home management volumes. Book exchanges with U.P. James of

[45] Dennis, "New York City"; and Frederic A. Brady credit report, New York, vol. 192, 581 (Jan. 25, 1858-July 31, 1870), R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University.
[46] Frederic A. Brady credit report, R.G. Dun and Company Collection; and Horowitz, *Rereading Sex*, 245-246.

Cincinnati and T.B. Peterson & Bros. of Philadelphia increased his publishing list, adding their popular works to his. As Frederic A., or F.A., Brady, his publishing list included Charles Dickens's *Household Words*, instructional works, and a variety of songsters, among an array of titles. In addition to reprinting plates he had acquired from other fiction publishers, he came into the possession of Thompson books originally published by William Berry. He introduced new items, such as *Fast Life in London and Paris*, which sold well enough to be a regular item in his advertisements and could be borrowed for two cents a day from the circulating library of the bookseller Charles Meyer on Division Street.[47]

With a relatively large list of offerings, Brady took part in selling publications produced by a variety of printers and arranged for the production of books distributed by others. Many Thompson novels reprinted by Brady exhibit gripper marks characteristic of an Adams power press. The printers with which he worked did not always use that press, however. On two surviving 1859 issues of the popular magazine *Household Words*, bar-like indentations can be seen on leaf fore edges. His printer, French & Wheat of 18 Ann St., could not have objected to that publication, apparently an authorized monthly reprint of Dickens's journal.

From 126 Nassau St., Brady made the magazine available in a wrapper dated several months after the original weekly publications in England, using what appear to be original plates. Advertisements for pianos, Harper & Brothers books, and other publishers

[47] See publisher's advertisement, *Fast Life* (New York: F.A. Brady, [1864-1869]), held at AAS. Charles Meyer's stamp on the title page bears an address of 122 Division St., New York. In 1870, the bookseller was located at 132 Division St., according to John H. Dingman, *Directory of Booksellers, Stationers, Newsdealers, and Music Dealers and List of Libraries in the United States and Canada* (New York: Charles Scribner & Co., 1870), 245.

indicated the anticipated middle-class interests of American readers.[48] At the time, T.B. Peterson & Bros. owned American rights to Dickens's works. As a vendor with an exchange relationship with the Philadelphia firm, Brady probably arranged for authorized plates from T.B. Peterson & Bros. rather than pirating the author. Renting plates made it possible for publishers whose markets did not directly compete to share materials.[49]

Brady published essays relating war experiences, but he usually targeted a wider audience that just men for his most noticeable works. He prolifically filed for copyright on "Ethiopian," or minstrel, songbooks, and a small number of household management titles and novels, with his claims beginning about 1857 and extending through 1869.[50] The American News Company distributed some of his publications (fig. 9.4). *The Red Hot Joker*, for instance, featured genial anecdotes and humor that would have amused those seeking mild entertainment, although the title suggested more vigorous stimulation. Brady's advertisement on the back cover of the yellow-wrappered booklet located him at 26 Ann St. and brought attention to books for which he had filed for copyright, as well as a continuing favorite whose source was Berry. Readers could ask for books to be mailed to them for free, according to his terms. *Ned Turner's Eccentric Songster* cost only 10 cents, but the 200 woodcuts in *Black Jokes for Blue Devils* boosted that book's price to 25 cents. For 15 cents, Owen Swift's *Boxing without a Master* would be sent to a reader.[51]

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[48] Charles Dickens, *Household Words: A Journal Conducted by Charles Dickens* 1, no. 5 (January 1859) and 2, no. 1 (March 1859), containing original issues dated, in the first, Oct. 16, Oct. 23, Oct. 30, and Nov. 6, 1858, and, in the second, Dec. 4, Dec. 11, Dec. 18, and Dec. 25, 1858. Held by author.
[49] "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," 49, part 2, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 360.
[50] Copyright Right Registers, Court of the Southern District of the State of New York, Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[51] *The Red Hot Joker. Containing Jokes, Witticism,[sic] and Odd Sayings* (New York: Frederic A. Brady, [186-]), held by author. The wrapper, which combines information about the American News Company with that of Frederic A. Brady, exhibits a particularly efficient imposition. Each of the publisher

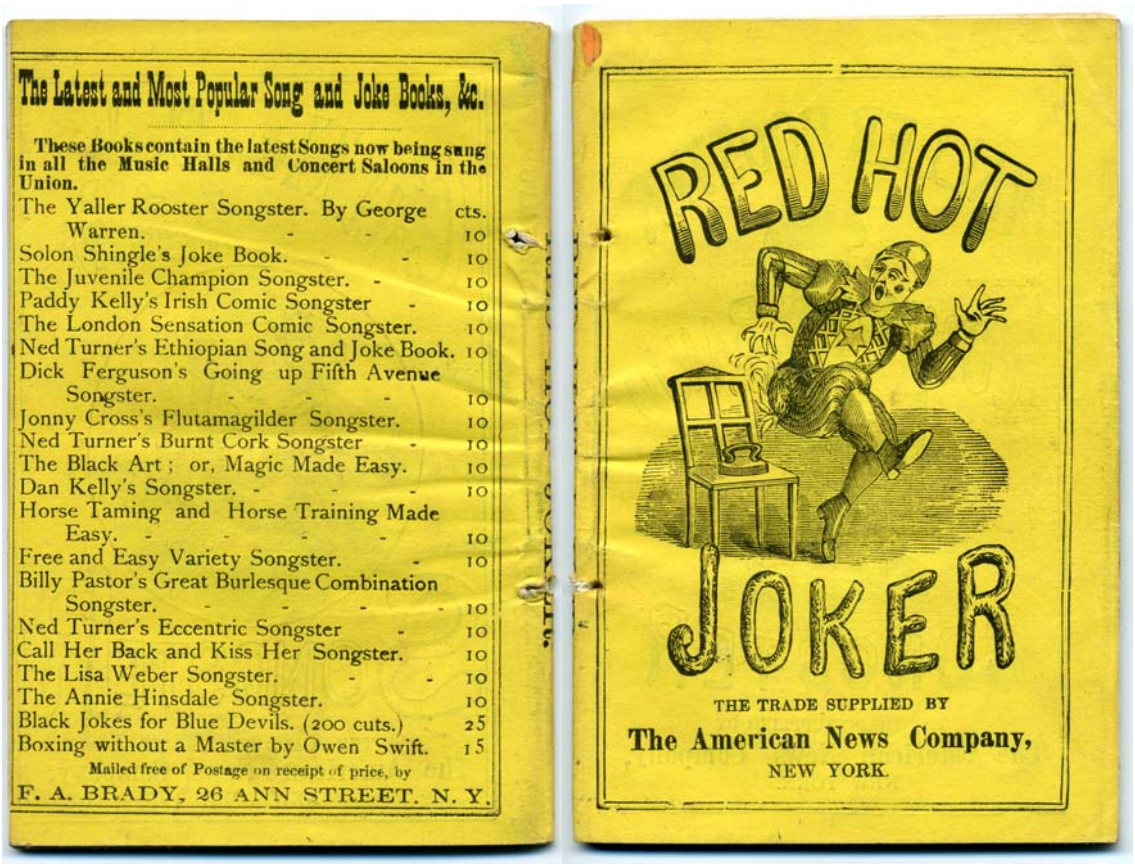

Fig. 9.4. *Red Hot Joker* (1869)

He undoubtedly acquired the plates for the latter through William Berry. Although a copy of Brady's version does not survive, the persistent placement of the title at the bottom of advertisements seems to be a signal to readers. Its ongoing inclusion in Brady's advertisements, along with other Berry originals, and the known shift of printing material between the two men offer strong evidence for the continuing transfer and salability of materials originating in Boston during the late 1840s and early 1850s.

Although he initiated a flurry of applications in 1869, most of his initial filings for that year were not deposited. Frederic Brady died in the summer of 1870, but his printing

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advertisements except the back cover also can serve as its own publication's cover. The spine text for each of those books is stereotyped to the left of the advertisement, allowing the plates to be interchanged easily between publications. A similar arrangement can be seen in many George Thompson books that implant cover plates as advertisements on wrapper interiors, although spine type is not included.

materials continued their service. *The Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* offers a particularly striking instance of the longevity of plates that had passed through Brady's hands. Berry published the novel in 1851, and Brady reissued it with the same text and cover illustration plates during the 1860s. After Brady's death, the plates entered the large post-Civil War market for second-hand plates that fed a boom in reprinting. As part of that phenomenon, the New York publisher M.J. Ivers & Co. reprinted *Life and Exploits* with Berry's original plates in the late 1880s or early 1890s.[52]

Both sensational fiction and explicit erotica persisted across publishers. Brady sold plates to Farrell at the end of 1863 as part of transferring to him the entire shop and premises. Farrell took over printed copies of books listed with the short titles of *Beauties*, *Cloister*, *Old Man*, *Secret Habits* and *Wedding Secrets*.[53] These were, in fact, some of the best selling erotic books in America during the 1860s. Farrell had acquired Alexander Walker's *Female Beauty*, *Venus in the Cloister* (often sold as *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia*), *The Secret Habits of the Female Sex, Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty-Five*, and *The Marriage Bed, or Wedding Secrets*. Within the decade, most of these books appeared with the overprint of J.H. Farrell.[54]

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[52] George Thompson, *Life and Exploits of "Bristol Bill," the Notorious Burglar; being compiled from His Own Confessions and the Records of Crime in England and America* (Boston: Willis Little & Co., [1851]); and reprints *Bristol Bill, Being an Account of the Life & Exploits of this Notorious Burglar* by Frederic A. Brady and M.J. Ivers & Co., both of New York.

[53] Helen Horowitz, *Rereading Sex*, 245-246.

[54] Alexander Walker, *Female Beauty, Being a Complete Analysis and Description of Every Part of a Woman's Form, and Showing Her Perfect Capacities for the Purposes of Love…* (New York: J.H. Farrell, [185-?]), held at LOC (seen as a partial copy on microfilm, with the wrapper bearing the title of *Female Beauties*); *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* (New York: J.H. Farrell, 186-), held at the Kinsey Institute (reprinted from an earlier offering made by booksellers in Philadelphia, as evidenced by the misprinting of a broken plate in the text of the book [available at AAS]); Jean Dubois, *The Secret Habits of the Female Sex; Letters Addressed to a Mother on the Evils of Solitude, and Its Seductive Temptations to Young Girls, the Premature Victims of a Pernicious Passion…* (New York: J.H. Farrell, [186-?], held at LOC; *Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty-Five* (New York: n.p., [186-]), held by a private collector, with the paper deterioration indicating it was probably printed during the Civil War; and *The Marriage Bed, or Wedding Secrets Revealed by the Torch of Hyman: Being a Full Explanation of All the Matrimonial Duties of Both*

Jeremiah H. Farrell

Brady's printing materials helped to establish the young man's early career. Only twenty-six years old when he purchased Brady's remaining stock, Jeremiah H. Farrell was, indeed, an entrepreneur with a potentially profitable future ahead of him.[55] Aided by Brady's plates, Farrell did a brisk business in books during the Civil War, supplying books in demand and at a profit. He promptly paid his bills and only sparingly requested credit as he arranged for the production and sales of his publications, according to an R.G. Dun and Company credit agent. With a business worth about $15,000 and creditors expressing faith in his prospects, Farrell's future as a publisher looked promising in 1864.[56]

Farrell oversaw and financed complex production systems that brought highly desired books to his customers and profits to himself. Yet in more than a decade of active publishing, he only attempted to copyright a single book. In 1867, he jointly filed for copyright on a street guide to the sprawling metropolis of New York. He claimed ownership with H.L. Williams, a Boston publisher of sensational fiction who, as part of Williams Bros. in New York, had become a vendor of semi-erotic books as well as of cheap fiction.[57]

[Br]ide and Bridegroom on the Eventful Night (New York: Charles S. Attwood, 21 Ann St., [185-?], held at AAS, and a later printing in which the publisher's address has been marked out.

[55] Farrell was only thirty-five at the time of his death, according to the coroner's report, which probably was more accurate than Comstock's arrest records. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice agent was known to have used his own judgment when suspects refused to reveal information about themselves. Farrell's age has been estimated from information on his death certificate. See Death Certificate for Jeremiah H. Farrell, Brooklyn Death Certificate #3636-5300 (1872), Kings County, New York Municipal Archives. Farrell's death is miswritten as 1873 in the *Brooklyn Death Index*, as is the reference number 4845, which should read 4843.

[56] Jeremiah H. Farrell credit report, vol. 196, p. 919 (Aug. 27, 1864-June 6, 1872), R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard Business School, Boston, Mass.

[57] Copyright records for the Southern District of New York, filed May 21, 1867, by J.H. Farrell and H.L. Williams, proprietors. Copyright Right Registers, District Court of the Southern District of New York, Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

As editors of the guidebook *The Horse Car Railroad Guide and Directory for the Cities of New York, Brooklyn and Jersey City*, they provided a handy reference for those wishing to know city transit routes and features for identifying cars. Listing notable landmarks along the different lines probably included mention of houses of assignation or private entertainments, in the manner of other guidebooks targeted to urban denizens. Farrell knew the seedy portions of New York well, and that knowledge aided him in deciding which books to publish and where to distribute them.

Publishing that directory allowed Farrell to take part in the boom in public urban transportation and acknowledged his close relationship with H.L. Williams. The two failed to complete their application for copyright, however. They appear to have been satisfied to have stated their claim on a sphere of content, perhaps to warn off potential competitors in a variation of "courtesy of the trade." Like many other publishers of books that might draw unwanted attention from authorities, they probably never intended to complete the book and allow its submission for deposit, such claims being invalidated if a text were indecent. A book in hand, copyrighted or not, and especially if cheaper because of having no copyright, found ready sales at railway stations and street corner newsstands, where such works could be brought to the attention of buyers.

In the midst of Farrell's bustling business, a Dun agent reversed the company's credit recommendation after determining that Farrell dealt in obscene books. "Pays his way but is a man of bad character," wrote one reporter in 1867. "He is the publisher of obscene books in which he manages to do a good business. Some credit him; others from the nature of his business have not the least confidence in him."[58]

[58] Farrell credit report, R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University.

Farrell found himself squeezed between the changing boundaries of municipal, state, and national activity in the regulation of indecent literature and declining profits in the publishing industry. Publishers had, for some time, been able to pay off local police or postmasters to turn a blind eye to their businesses. When arrested, many New York vendors found powerful allies who could discretely arrange to have charges dropped. Moral reformers and medical practitioners in New York urged the state to exert control over publishers to reduce levels of graft. Rather than continuing with common law infractions in which local officials typically only required the cessation of such activity, statutory law allowed for state control over prosecutions and criminalized the offense. An 1865 reform proposal failed to pass into state law but articulated the main changes to come in its recommendation to broaden the types of items considered obscene and the circle of those who could be prosecuted. Lobbying by the Young Men's Christian Association aided in passing such a law in 1868, creating new conditions under which Farrell could do business.[59]

The statute encompassed a much broader area of activity, defining articles for birth control, abortion, and immoral purposes in addition to defining certain publications as being obscene. It also authorized the confiscation of property involved in the manufacture, distribution, or exhibition of such items, allowing the destruction of the

[59] Timothy Gilfoyle documents the ongoing role of moral reformers in addressing vice in New York City in *City of Eros*. Commercialization brought items that had long been part of American life into public view, making commodities relating to birth control and abortion more subject to regulation, according to Andrea Tone, *Devices and Desires*. See Donna Dennis, "New York City," for analysis of the differing visions of appropriate use of government power and struggle for power between city and state power brokers. Helen Horowitz in *Rereading Sex* analyzes the ideological currents influencing anti-obscenity reform. James C. Mohr, *Abortion in America: The Origins and Evolution of a National Policy, 1800-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) asserts activism on the part of medical societies in the formation of statutes, but Marvin Olasky, *Abortion Rites: A Social History of Abortion in America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1992) argues that members of the medical profession took a more heterogeneous approach. On debates about abortion during this period, see Janet Farrell Brodie, *Contraception and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994).

property after a suspect's conviction. This doubled-edged approach squelched sources of non-publication income for publishers and forced their production networks to bear heightened financial risk. Erotica vendors specialized in a genre of books, but men like Haynes, Ackerman, and Farrell often advertised other profitable commodities, such as explicit playing cards, condoms, sexual aids, or abortifacients. Whether a publisher actually supplied those items, making known their availability became illegal in 1868.[60]

Federal restrictions began tightening at the same time. From the era of the Founders through the Civil War, postal officials debated the department's power to assert control over the content of matter if conveyed and the potential for abuse by a party in power. After much dispute about the sending of abolitionist literature to Southern post offices in the 1830s, postmasters were directed not to censor mail in their care. Nevertheless, many did, knowing the ambivalence of federal postal officials about forcing postmasters to handle materials offensive to local patrons.

Packages that might cause damage to other pieces of mail had long been excluded by regulation, but by the Civil War a precedent existed for identifying and prohibiting damaging intellectual content. In 1861, the postmaster general ruled that certain items considered treasonable could be excluded from the mails. During the war, postal regulations had been relaxed to allow shipments of clothing, staples, and personal items to reach soldiers. Along with these necessities came others: Bibles, cheap novels, and illicit literature desired by encamped soldiers to while away the time between campaigns. New restrictions at the end of the conflict attempted to redirect from the postal pipeline the indecent books that took advantage of relatively low rates for shipping to customers.

[60] On state laws regarding obscenity and Ohio's leadership in this area, Elizabeth Bainum Hove gives useful information in "Stamping Out Smut: The Enforcement of Obscenity Laws, 1872-1915" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1998).

In 1865, postal regulations prohibited obscene books, as well as a variety of other print materials, from the mails.[61]

The post office created a structure for the federal government to bolster and assert control over commercial activity and the spread of ideas, allowing the distribution of indecent publications as well as those for other purposes. After passage of the first postal obscenity law in 1865, a small number of people were arrested, primarily from Chicago and New York. Unfortunately, prosecution records contain little elaboration about specific offenses. Among the first arrested for mailing obscene items was Benjamin H. Day. A prominent New York publisher and father of the inventor of the "benday" screen for printing, he allegedly had become involved in the mailing of obscene pictures. After making bail, his case was discharged in May, with no record of any further action. Several book vendors followed through the end of the decade. In 1866, S.B. Alrich, alias Dr. S. Batcheldor, became the first person indicted for circulating obscene books through the mails. The law alone could not convict the Chicago man, however. Alrich fled from criminal prosecution, reportedly forfeiting his bail. In 1868 and 1869, three other men were arrested for mailing obscene books and fined. The 1865 law resulted in fines, discharged arrests, and skipped bail. It did not, however, dam the tide of books.[62]

Caught between disputes about the role of government in people's lives, concerns over the permissiveness of war publishing, and the heightened debate about how print fit into the shaping of social values, erotica publishers were particularly vulnerable because of the unstable economy for publishers after the Civil War. The boom in inexpensive

[61] Lindsay Rogers, *The Postal Power of Congress: A Study in Constitutional Expansion* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1916), 51 note, 103-105, and 196.
[62] Bureau of the Chief Inspector, *Register of Arrests for Offenses Against Postal Laws, 1864-1897*, RG 28, 229, Vol. 1 of 13, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

reading that began with the rise of story papers and books mailed as newspapers in the 1840s constituted what publishing historians have called the first paperback revolution.

Demand for paperbacks remained high throughout the war, as both civilians and soldiers distracted themselves with fiction and inspirational reading. Publishers with a stake in linking their books to the war effort increased production, with the American Bible Society promising a Bible for every soldier. Vendors of illicit literature profited along with others offering cheap reading to soldiers far away from home and with excessive time on their hands. They faced a significant drop in sales by mail when those men returned to their homes, resuming their careers and family connections. If soldiers had read pornography while at war, those at home nevertheless desired them to return as unblemished heroes. Reading indecent books simply did not comport with the moral cause of saving the Union. Making up sales lost to the military meant expanding efforts to reach customers through street sales, periodical depots, and postal promotions to those who lived far away from urban enclaves with more liberal views of legitimate commerce.

A second paperback revolution occurred during the 1870s and 1880s, but publishers of indecent books felt its effects sooner than many other firms in the industry. The price of paper began falling after the war, but steep increases in other production costs caused books to become more expensive. Papermakers were well on the way to becoming more heavily capitalized and automated, as well. Mechanization required investments that could only be justified with volume production, and mills employed a variety of techniques and processes to keep machines running with rags, wood, and straw, or mixtures of those fibers. From the demand side, publishers pushed for larger sheet sizes in order to economize in printing and binding operations, stimulating papermakers

and printers to use equipment accommodating consumer demand for cheap publications. At the same time, the lack of a copyright agreement with other countries depressed the price of American novels. Publishers who paid royalties to authors were forced to hold their prices down in order to compete with those who pirated foreign texts. French and English works that appealed to American readers could be reprinted at will, including those of the real Charles Paul de Kock and of G.W.M. Reynolds.[63]

In 1870, Farrell published the lengthy Reynolds novel, *The Merry Wives of London*. Like many other American entrepreneurs, he profited from the writer's popularity without paying royalties. Farrell took advantage of paper produced through the new sulfite process, placing him at the forefront of those in his industry willing to print on paper manufactured through that emerging method. He turned to his stock of plated illustrations for the cover of the book, reusing a stereotyped wood engraving featured in the 1850s on the wrapper of a George Thompson novel probably published by W. Berry & Co. Included as a publisher advertisement on the inside cover of *The Twin Brothers*, the plate had been altered so that the publisher's name read "Perry & Co."[64]

Although it can be difficult to tell apart an original engraving and a skillful reproduction, details in Farrell's version show that a draughtsman refurbished the illustration or a stereotype of the first plate. Scratches from wear, deeper tooling along existing lines, and the difficulty of reengraving the lozenge-style crosshatching commonly used as a shading technique are apparent. *Figure 9.5* shows the cover of

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[63] John Tebbel, *The Expansion of an Industry, 1865-1919*, vol. 2 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States* (New York: R.R. Bowker, 1972), 482-483.

[64] James Lindridge, *The Merry Wives of London* (New York : J.H. Farrell, 1870), held at Assumption College, Worcester, Mass. Courtesy, Assumption College. Pinholes characteristic of sulfite production can be found on this apparently sole surviving copy. Publisher advertisement in George Thompson [Greenhorn], *The Twin Brothers: Or The Fatal Resemblance* (New York: Perry & Co., [185-]), held at AAS. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Socity. Both illustrations are the same size in their respective publications.

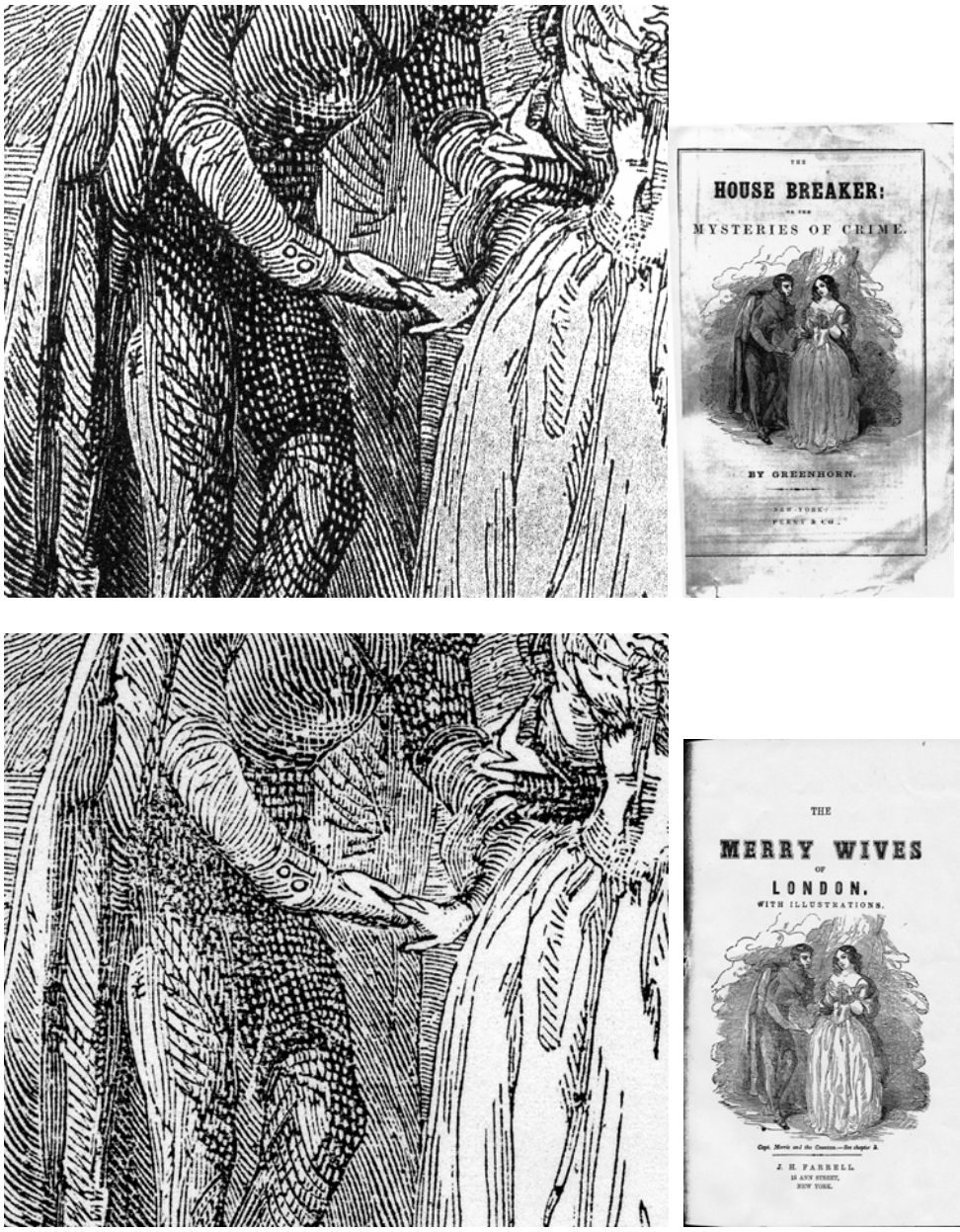

Fig. 9.5. Details of wrapper illustrations of *The Housebreaker* (185-) and *The Merry Wives of London* (1870), with covers (at right)

The House Breaker, alongside a detail from the same illustration on the cover of *The Merry Wives of London*, showing the plate progression. Farrell issued much more explicit books than those of Reynolds, although in the 1880s Comstock included books in the same vein as *Merry Wives* among those that merited prosecution.

Having acquired Brady's stock of plates for Henry S.G. Smith & Co., he became a supplier of books traded under the name of Paul de Kock. Those books as well as *The Secret Habits* and *Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia* surely were among the volumes that caught the attention of industry observers such as R.G. Dun and Company credit reporters. In the midst of what appeared to be a bustling enterprise after the Civil War, a Dun agent reversed the company's credit recommendation after determining that Farrell dealt in obscene books. "Pays his way but is a man of bad character," wrote a credit reporter in 1867. "He is the publisher of obscene books in which he manages to do a good business. Some credit him; others from the nature of his business have not the least confidence in him."[65]

The content of the books that he sold influenced reports of his entrepreneurial activities. As word spread about the publisher's sale of indecent books and pictures, credit reports began hinting at a relationship between the social transgressions portrayed by the books he sold and his business practices. An entry for Farrell in 1870 noted his intemperateness. The following year a reporter sternly warned, "Bad man, bad business, bad habits, bad character – [credit] not recommended."[66]

Anthony Comstock tracked down Farrell, arresting him in May of 1872. According to Comstock's notes about the publisher, Farrell oversaw a complex production network, and his business had grown during the war years and afterward. From his home at 159 Adams St. in Brooklyn, Farrell appears to have coordinated the production of the books he sold. Thomas Holman of Yonkers became Farrell's main printer starting in 1868, producing at least 147,000 books over the next four years.

[65] Farrell credit report, R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University.
[66] Farrell credit report, R.G. Dun and Company Collection, Baker Library, Harvard University.

Holman in turn subcontracted those books, thousands at a time, to Charles Darrow for binding in lower Manhattan. Forty female employees folded sheets into gatherings, then stitched or sewed them together to form books.[67]

Charles Darrow's female bindery workers in the early 1870s were made complicit in the trade by their folding and sewing of Farrell's books. That Darrow integrated books considered obscene into his everyday operations reflecting gender segregation in the printing industry of his day shows that he was not marginal to the trade in his labor practices. Yet that conformity to gender roles in his industry meant his business routines presented an even greater danger to the social values of society. Using the techniques that propelled American publishing to master production of cheap books as well as more expensive volumes, Darrow and Farrell exhibited the traits of progressive businessmen.[68]

Cornered by the persistent Anthony Comstock, Farrell went into hiding. Rather than fleeing to the South or disappearing for two weeks, as rumored, he simply went underground in New York and prepared to die. Arrested in early May by Comstock and last seen alive on May 10, 1872, he was discovered dead the following day at 159 Adams St. Having died at his home in Brooklyn, he was buried in the same cemetery just two months after Haynes. The death of Jeremiah H. Farrell, who had seemed a successor to Haynes, seemed to predict that major purveyors of indecent books would not escape prosecution in the coming years.[69]

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[67] Jeremiah H. Farrell entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1872," 7-8, container 1.
[68] Excellent sources on gendered labor patterns are Jacob Abbott, *The Harper Establishment: How Books are Made* (1855; reprint, New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001) and Virginia Penney, *How Women Can Make Money* (1863; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1971). The original title of Penney's book was *Employment of Women*.
[69] Death Certificate for Jeremiah H. Farrell, Brooklyn #3636-5300 (1872).

The codification of postal regulations in 1872 recognized the role of the post office in protecting patrons from harm. Under Section 148, obscene publications came under scrutiny in the same way as a debt collection post card threatening a deadbeat account. When passed in 1873, the Comstock law brought to the federal level a preoccupation with addressing information about spheres of sexual activity and information about contraception that had been written into New York's 1868 Act for the Suppression of Trade in and Circulation of Obscene Literature. In turn, the New York law was fortified in 1873 to align the state with federal statutes. The Comstock Act of 1873 also expanded the types of items that could be prosecuted if sent by mail to include newspapers and articles for immoral purposes. Postal officials could confiscate materials suspected of being part of a criminal endeavor as evidence. As an agent for the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice and a special investigator of the U.S. Post Office Department, Anthony Comstock weighed his options for prosecuting malefactors, choosing favorable jurisdictions whenever possible.

Anthony Comstock's efforts to gain a conviction against Haynes, Ackerman, and Farrell did not succeed, but their deaths were a means to an end for Comstock. With the power given to agents of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice by New York state law to initiate proceedings, he effectively gained the ability to confiscate a publisher's livelihood in addition to the power to ruin a reputation by public exposure. The ability to initiate federal proceedings against a vendor sending purportedly obscene material through the mail at either the location of mailing or delivery allowed Comstock to select the jurisdictions in which he was most likely to gain a conviction.

These tools proved to be formidable weapons. Publishers continued to press against the wall of Comstock's solid determination, but fewer did so after the mid-1870s. During the paperback revolution of that decade and the next, manufacturers and publishers became less willing to put their assets and reputations at risk for the quick profits of selling potentially illegal literature. The lack of copyright for foreign authors, the increasing availability of cheap paper, easy entry into the publishing industry by firms willing to undercut established prices, and recurrent economic crises made publishing a risky proposition. Nevertheless, enterprising entrepreneurs challenged Comstock's authority and ability to place boundaries around proper uses – and definitions – of American books.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

Rather than being a simple side story to Anthony Comstock's crusade against indecent publications during the 1870s and later, technological innovation occupies a central position in the history of American erotica. Indecent books offers compelling evidence of the range of technological and entrepreneurial practices in American publishing during the nineteenth century, both before and after Comstock began his campaign to halt the nation's trade in obscene matter. Publishers of indecent books took advantage of emerging processes and marketing strategies, relying on consumer demand to determine the limits of socially permissible commerce. Publications that failed to warrant a conviction for obscenity as well as those that did both offer clues about the lines that became apparent. Some of the printers who prepared new materials for printing obscene books may have become more furtive by 1891, but publishers, authors, and producers continued to challenge obscenity prosecutions attempted by Comstock.

The technological advances that materially made possible the spreading threat of obscene reading derived from the very human impulse for making what is into something better. Anthony Comstock and the various vice societies in the United States fought not against the machines that made the printing trades so capable of becoming a hydra-headed enemy. Their true battle was against a nation of readers who demanded print that provided novel, erotic stimulation in the form of a book. Publishers facilitated that desire by navigating changing government policies toward the printing trades and coordinating the manufacture of products for a growing market.

While certain of Comstock's cases were attended by celebrity, only a handful of those whom he prosecuted were book publishers. The reformer attempted to convict Victoria Woodhull in 1872, but his accusations hinged on her mailing of the newspaper *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*. His unsuccessful effort became an early landmark in his battles with the press, motivating him to lobby for the widening of the postal law in 1873 to specifically embrace newspapers. Frank Leslie, whose case in 1873 was dismissed, published *Days' Doings*, adding to Comstock's ire at public support in favor of newspaper publishers. Comstock railed against continuing corruption among prosecutors, whom he accused of being under the influence of powerful patrons. After a spate of cases in the 1870s, the publicity surrounding his arrests diminished.[1]

Several types of books came to his attention, according to the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice arrest records. Comstock detailed his work suppressing physiological literature, which until the 1860s had sustained a status as educational rather than obscene matter. He arrested Seth H. Hunsdon of Albany, aka M.B. LaCroix, the publisher of *Physiological View of Marriage*. Comstock claimed that he confiscated from Hunsdon 10,000 books and 75,000 circulars and advertisements in 1873. Indicted and convicted, Hunsdon was pardoned from his one-year sentence by President Grant.[2]

Comstock pursued Ezra J. Reynolds, who published a version of W.C. Lispenard's *Practical Private Medical Guid*e renamed as the *Pocket Companion*. James Bryan of the fictitious Clinton Medical & Surgical Institute was targeted, as well. Only because of efforts by publishers to market such books as titillating rather than as medical information did American courts begin to rule them, in practice, to be obscene. The

[1] Victoria C. Woodhull entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1872," 13-14, container 1; and Frank Leslie entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1872," 15-16, container 1.
[2] Seth H. Hunsdon entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1873," 21-22, container 1.

addition of restrictions about contraceptive information to state and federal obscenity laws brought such works within the purview of prosecutors in the 1870s, although Ashbee largely excluded medical treatises from his own listing of indecent books.[3]

After a revision to the postal obscenity law in 1876 and a Supreme Court case that clarified postal powers to restrict certain items from the mails, much of Comstock's efforts began to focus on lotteries by mail. The Supreme Court's ruling in *Ex parte Jackson* affirmed the constitutionality of existing federal postal laws that excluded items with specified types of content. Appeals became more difficult, and Comstock's ability to pressure publishers all the greater. As statutory loopholes were eliminated and legal practices began to consolidate into a reliable net, the convictions of book publishers, as opposed to book dealers or peddlers, appeared less frequently. By the early 1880s, Post Office Department special investigation case files note few book publishers among those prosecuted and the Society's arrest records verify convictions for a diminishing number.

Correspondence by Comstock to his superiors in the Post Office over the 1870s and early 1880s evolved into a formulaic recitation of charges. The notable absence of physical evidence in postal special investigation case files makes difficult not to turn to Comstock's careful arrest records and published memoirs for information. The reformer explained low conviction rates in state courts by frequently reporting that a case had been

[3] Ezra J. Reynolds entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1873," 21-22, container 1. W.C. Lispenard, *Practical Private Medical Guide: Adapted to the Use of Every Individual, (Male and Female,) Mostly Original, and Compilations from Eminent American and European Medical Authors* (Rochester, N.Y.: Published for the Author, 1854), held at AAS; and *Dr. Lispenard's Pocket Companion, or Marriage Guide: Being a Popular Treatise on the Anatomy and Physiology of the Genital Organs, in Both Sexes, with their Uses and Abuses…* (n.l.: Published for the Author, 1854). The latter features a wrapper attributing the work to McGown and Kewin of Albany, N.Y., undoubtedly only one of a number of firms that produced the book on behalf of the Lispenard. The book was stereotyped and appears to have gone through multiple printings, which publishers often described as "editions," although they actually used the same plates (or copies of them). This book is the "27th edition." James Bryan entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1873," 25-26, container 1.

"fixed" by the district attorney or a politician. Especially in his first years of assisting in New York prosecutions, this may have been true. In others, he simply underestimated the threshold for obtaining a guilty verdict and miscalculated the sympathy of juries.

Gambling, lotteries, and fraud typified many of the crimes that Comstock investigated after his campaigns of the early 1870s, according to his log books for the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. Depredation of the mails, a category encompassing primarily theft from, damage to, or the opening of letters and packages, demanded more attention from inspectors than pursuing those who deposited obscene matter. His arrest of Ezra Heywood, publisher of *Cupid's Yokes*, in 1877 brought renewed attention to the problem of indecent books, but Comstock found only small vendors of books to harass for much of the late 1870s.[4]

The volume of books publicly for sale declined in part through the efforts of the Society, leaving less substantial forms of literature among the items remaining to prosecute. "The traffic has recently fallen into the line of photographs, songs, leaflets, microscopic charms, rubber goods, and piquant circulars…," noted the Society's report in 1878. Anthony Comstock explained the lack of arrests as a lessening of the trade due to the Society's effectiveness. "It is satisfactory to observe that within the past year no one has dared to put any great amount of capital into merchandise of this description. Large seizures among the dealers, as formerly, can no longer be expected." In recognition of the society's effectiveness, the annual report carried on its cover a medallion image of a police officer leading away a suspect and a reformer throwing books into a bonfire.[5]

[4] Ezra Heywood entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1877," 103-104, container 1.
[5] *The Second Annual Report of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice* (New York: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1876), 6 and 11. *The Fourth Annual Report of the New York Society*

Books at the Boundary

The arrest records of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice offer scarce but valuable information about specific titles, including possible clues to the boundaries between works that Anthony Comstock believed could be prosecuted successfully and those that he could force publishers, under the threat of arrest, into withdrawing from sale. Referenced against bibliographical information, publishers prosecuted by Comstock typically can be identified as reprinters taking part in networks that sold or loaned plates for profitable works. They behaved in a manner consistent with the reprinting mania of the American publishing industry during the 1870s. Until about 1890, the publishing industry plunged headlong into intensely competitive sales of cheap books, making publishers wary of pursuing ventures that might be prosecuted, yet surprisingly persistent.

From the start of his organized attempts in to rid New York City and the nation of indecent books through 1890, Comstock attempted to limit the amount of information released about specific books in order to avoid promoting the sales of obscene materials. Although extremely few of the cases in which he obtained convictions offer the titles of the books under scrutiny, more works appeared in entries in which he recorded the failure of a prosecution or his actions in convincing a publisher to relinquish suspect items. Comstock occasionally gave a firm the opportunity to cease its activities, noting at the end of a year the names of those who acceded to his demands. The boundaries between legal and obscene literature intermingled in the titles he cited.

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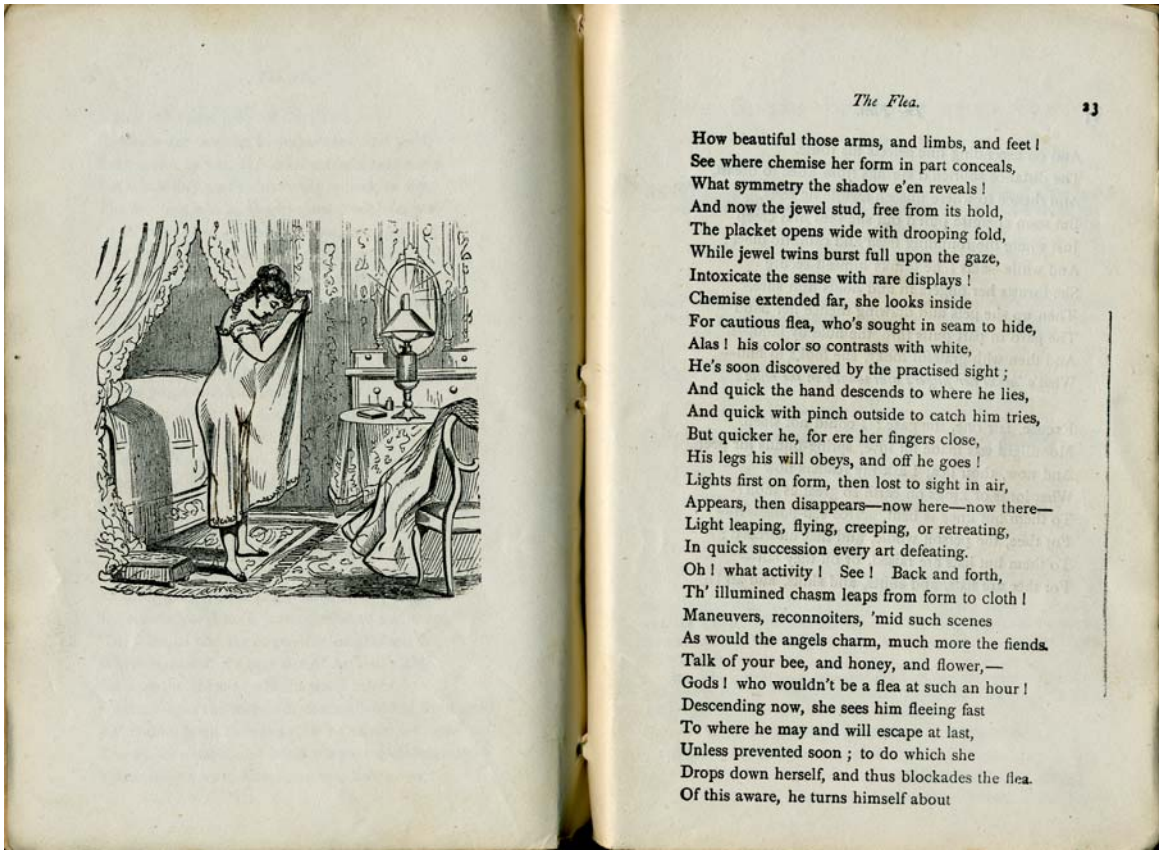
for the Suppression of Vice (New York: New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1878), 7 and front cover.

Founded in 1871, Hurst & Co. became a major force behind the avalanche of reprints available to Americans in the 1870s and 1880s. Early in the firm's history, Thomas D. Hurst attempted to offer books that could be sold as "fancy" books but that did not carry the risk of arrest. In the latter effort, he did not succeed. Comstock recorded M.L. Byre's *Marriage Guide* and *Tricks and Traps of Widows and Maidens*, both offered by Hurst, as offensive. Approached in February of 1876 by a New York Society for the Suppression of Vice agent with a warning that carrying those titles made him liable to prosecution, Hurst responded by taking the books off the market. Street vendors, including a certain O'Kane on Wall Street, were given notice and ceased offering the book. In return, Comstock declined to press charges.[6]

In 1879, Comstock warned C. Sinclair, owner of a bookstore selling *The Flea*, that prosecution could be initiated against him. A surviving copy of *The Flea* appears to be mildly risqué (fig. 10.1). A small bound book with floral-embossed, purple paper-covered boards and humorous illustrations, *The Flea* follows its main character as he hops onto various hosts, finally landing on an attractive sleeping woman, whose slumber he interrupts. Through double entendre and metaphor, the writer explores the woman's body through the travels of a flea. The storyline employs the familiar literary device of the perspective of a flea or a piece of bedroom furniture, allowing an author to invade the inner sanctum of the bedroom or other intimate events. Although hardly explicit either in text or illustrations, such works had the opportunity to introduce a reader to more substantial forms of erotica. The book's theme resembled that of infamous English and

[6] Hurst & Co. note, appended to "Report of Persons Arrested…1876," 83-84, container 1.



The Flea. 23

How beautiful those arms, and limbs, and feet!
See where chemise her form in part conceals,
What symmetry the shadow e'en reveals!
And now the jewel stud, free from its hold,
The placket opens wide with drooping fold,
While jewel twins burst full upon the gaze,
Intoxicate the sense with rare displays!
Chemise extended far, she looks inside
For cautious flea, who's sought in seam to hide,
Alas! his color so contrasts with white,
He's soon discovered by the practised sight;
And quick the hand descends to where he lies,
And quick with pinch outside to catch him tries,
But quicker he, for ere her fingers close,
His legs his will obeys, and off he goes!
Lights first on form, then lost to sight in air,
Appears, then disappears—now here—now there—
Light leaping, flying, creeping, or retreating,
In quick succession every art defeating.
Oh! what activity! See! Back and forth,
Th' illumined chasm leaps from form to cloth!
Maneuvers, reconnoiters, 'mid such scenes
As would the angels charm, much more the fiends.
Talk of your bee, and honey, and flower,—
Gods! who wouldn't be a flea at such an hour!
Descending now, she sees him fleeing fast
To where he may and will escape at last,
Unless prevented soon; to do which she
Drops down herself, and thus blockades the flea.
Of this aware, he turns himself about

Fig. 10.1. *The Flea* (1871)

French works, and asking for O'Kane's book may have served as a code for expressing an interest in others, as well.[7]

Sinclair purchased the inventory from Thomas O'Kane, who probably stopped publicly selling Hurst's item but continued to make other items available upon request to customers. When O'Kane decided to leave the business, his stock and entire shop went to Sinclair. Surviving copies of *The Flea* from 1870 and 1871 contain the original owner's advertisements. Among those books, notices for physiological works intermingle with

[7] C. Sinclair note, appended to "Report of Persons Arrested…1879," 145-146, container 1. Comstock actually writes *The Fleas*, but the association of *The Flea* with Thomas O'Kane warrants interpreting the additional "s" as a misspelling. By You, *The Flea* (New York: Published for the Trade, 1871), held by author. (The title also seems to be a word play on *The Busy Fleas*, a burlesque show that Comstock attempted to close.)

those for hygiene literature, drink recipe books, and fiction. The physiological titles probably were the subject of Comstock's ire as much as *The Flea*. One advertisement cited the *True Marriage Guide; Or, Nature Revealed* as "The Great Book of the Age!" Another listed five books by Frederick Hollick: *The Marriage Guide, The Diseases of Woman, The Male Generative Organs, The Matrons Manual of Midwifery*, and *A Popular Treatise on Venereal Diseases in All Their Forms*.[8]

Comstock demanded that the books be destroyed. In June of that year, Sinclair turned over 891 books, in order to avoid prosecution. The publisher also volunteered 520 copies of *An Alarm to the Present Generation* the following February, according to the reformer. Such books continued to be available on the streets of New York, with the right connections, however. Hollick's works appeared in constant reprints, bound in attractive, embossed cloth volumes and available from numerous vendors.[9]

Despite his efforts to suppress classical erotica, such fare sometimes escaped Comstock's net. David S. Knox and Xavier Dayton narrowly escaped punishment for their roles as book salesmen and peddlers in Asbury Park, New Jersey, in late 1881. Under a warrant issued by the justice of the peace in that locality, the two clerks, who worked for a firm on Broadway in New York, were arrested for selling books at an auction in Asbury Park. Police seized from them about a dozen copies of *The Heptameron* and *The Decameron*. After being indicted and tried the following spring,

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[8] *The Flea* (1871) and an earlier copy (New York: [Thomas O'Kane], 1870), held by AAS, contain the same text and vary only slightly in advertisements. O'Kane advertised his own book as "exceedingly droll and rich," for the price of 50 cents. O'Kane's name and address have been torn from that book, however.
[9] The second book, *An Alarm to the Present Generation*, appears to be the same as that of John H. Stevenson, *An Alarm to the Present Generation* (New York: The Author, 1871), which purported to advise readers about vice, ranging from prostitution to false religion, and Biblical tenets on the honesty, charity, and right relations between the sexes. A number of firms across the country, but primarily from New York, reprinted Hollick's books from the 1840s to the 1880s. Publishers with their name on a printing included Burgess, Stringer and its successor, Stringer & Townsend; Nafis & Cornish; T.W. Strong and its collaborator G.W. Cottrell; American News Company; and Excelsior Publishing House.

they were declared not guilty.[10] The defense made the case that a gentleman might turn legitimately to those two volumes for educational purposes. Fortunately for Knox and Dayton, their customer had been a youthful lawyer. Such a person, the defense claimed, "was a proper person to be informed on all subjects," thus giving the salesmen "just cause" for the transaction. Dayton asserted that he had even warned the buyer, "Don't leave it on the parlor table, or let the ladies see it."[11]

Comstock doubted that the books actually served legitimate purposes. As exceptional examples of Italian literature, Boccaccio's works would be suitable only in the original language, argued Comstock. Translations removed the very purpose of acquiring such an item for a library.[12] In the instance of *The Decameron,* Comstock's opinion did not agree with the courts in which he tried his cases, perhaps because of the typical way in which Americans gained access to the book. During the nineteenth century, numerous general publishers made English editions available but left untranslated or, at most, transcribed into French, the well known and explicit seduction scene within the tenth chapter of the third day. Written in medieval Italian, the passage could only be read closely by those with a scholarly familiarity with Italian.[13]

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[10] Knox and Dayton note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1882," 235-236, container 1.
[11] Knox and Dayton note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1882," 235-236, container 1.
[12] Anthony Comstock, *Traps for the Young*, The John Harvard Library, ed. Robert Bremner (1883; Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 170-176. Comstock refers to the case at hand in his discussion, although he does not name the men (170).
[13] Many versions advertised the inclusion of suppressed portions and kept this pledge by providing a summary in French, as a note to the section kept in Italian. This addition made the text accessible at least to educated readers. See*The Decameron, or Ten Days Entertainment* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, n.d.), held by author. One of the frontispieces for this edition is the same as that used for an engraving within *Life Among the Nymphs* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1867"), held at AAS, although the remaining illustrations for the former appear to have been prepared especially for it. Silas Andrus & Son of Hartford, Conn., sold editions of the book, also. A binder working for that firm either ignored the waste paper he was working into the book's binding or chose them to insert humor into his labors. Where the spine falls away from the text block, portions of the eighth chapter of Ecclesiastes can be seen printed on the scrap paper used. See *The Decameron, or Ten Days' Entertainment of Boccaccio*, 2 vols. (Hartford: Silas Andrus and Son, 1851), held by author.

The trade also expanded beyond traditional publishers and forms of books. Young schoolboys often circulated illicit books among themselves, and Comstock warned of the pernicious influence that a single corrupt individual might have upon the still malleable sensibilities of other students. In recording the case of Waldo P. Johnson of Newburgh, New York, he hinted at the depths to which indecent literature could make an otherwise privileged person sink. In June of 1882, the city recorder of that city issued a warrant for the nineteen-year-old Johnson for making available a copy of *The Washington Belle* on loan to his classmates at a nearby private academy. Comstock described the young man, who was arrested with a Bowie knife in his possession, as "ready for trouble." He had exposed twenty others to the book, which went around the school along with about half a dozen leaflets and printed songs. The Borden's Condensed Milk factory had become one repository, according to Comstock. The nephew of the Bordens, Johnson had stored yet more materials within his possessions at that family's household. Little pressure was needed to get the suspect to confess. After a night in jail, he pled guilty, receiving a suspended sentence and forfeiting the items police had seized from him: one picture and twenty-five songs and poems.[14]

Yet another publisher received a reprimand for his activities and the opportunity to avoid prosecution. Comstock targeted T.B. Peterson & Bros., the prominent Philadelphia publishing firm, in 1884. Begun simply as T.B. Peterson in 1845 by Theophilus Beasley Peterson, the firm became a powerhouse in offering cheap books by

[14] Waldo P. Johnson entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1882," 219-220, container 1. Although no copy of *The Washington Belle* appears to be extant (or even to have been seized by police), it is listed as *The Confessions of a Washington Belle* in a publisher's prospectus held by the American Antiquarian Society. Also listed as planned for production, according to that circular, were *The Adventures of Anna P---*, *The Beautiful Creole of Savannah*, and *The Libertine Enchantress*. " 'Venus' Library;' Or Tales of Illicit Love," publisher's prospectus [New York?] [187-?], held at AAS.

T.S. Arthur, romances, cookbooks, and other light publications. The company's Cheap Editions for the Millions offered authorized Dickens volumes at popular prices in the 1850s, and the establishment later published books by George Sand and Emile Zolá. George W. and Thomas Peterson became partners in 1858, forming T.B. Peterson & Bros. While the firm's publishing list remained popular that decade, during the 1860s the number of additions declined, as did sales. By the 1880s, the firm had settled into a slump, no doubt hit hard by the increasing competition from the growth of reprint literature in the 1870s and 1880s.[15]

Reprints of the perennially popular *Awful Disclosures*, which the firm had sold since at least 1854, helped to buoy sales in the 1880s. Rather than prosecuting T.B. Peterson & Bros. for that title, however, Comstock cited works by G.W.M. Reynolds in his admonishment to the company's owner. Comstock singled out several volumes in the series *The Mysteries of London*, including *The Court of London*, *Rose Foster*, *Caroline of Brunswick*, *Venetia Trelawney*, and *Rosa Lambert*. Their display in the company's window left the firm open to prosecution, according to Comstock. He threatened to turn the matter over to the Philadelphia district attorney's attention.

The prospects of public exposure in the midst of a period of poor sales probably concerned Thomas Peterson greatly, and he volunteered to export the already printed books to Australia or India. (Perhaps the London business partner with whom he printed *Awful Disclosures* similarly sent troublesome books abroad.) The plates could be sent to a Massachusetts foundry for melting, he suggested. Comstock stood firm, demanding the destruction of all materials in order to drop the investigation. The inventory of books and

[15] T.B. Peterson & Co. note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1884," 14-15, container 2. "American Literary Publishing Houses, 1638-1899," 49, part 2, 361-362.

plates were transferred at last to Comstock, who noted with biblical satisfaction, "Then all were torn asunder and leaves rent, and plates, every plate was destroyed."[16]

Although relatively new as an element in book publishing, photographic printing offered its own dangers to citizens, according to Comstock. He targeted Adolph Wittemann of Staten Island, who planned to help readers take part in constructng their own erotic publications. He specialized in collotype reproductions using a photochemical technique to make prints, and several photographic landscapes from the mid-1880s produced by Wittemann survive. Some, like those in volume four of *The Dresden Art Gallery* (fig. 10.2), contained loose leaf images that may have been similar to those singled out by Anthony Comstock. Wrapped in red book cloth embossed with gold and black ornaments, an extant copy of that undated portfolio of unbound prints reproduces religious and mythical iconography, with the final volume containing only nudes. Wittemann published it in association with Wilhelm Hoffmann of Dresden, proclaiming it to be part of his "Popular Series."[17]

Comstock halted Wittemann's project in the summer of 1888 to sell bound books of blank paper and erotic pictures that readers could take into a waterclosets and inscribe for their own amusement. Having had his imports of such books confiscated by customs agents, Witteman spoke with a lawyer and gained the advice that such publications were illegal. Undeterred, he decided to produce them himself through his connections in the trade. His position at the Albertype Co., 58 Reade St., may have introduced him to Andrew H. Kellog, a printer at 100 and 102 Reade St. Kellog manufactured 180,000 pictures for the project and delivered them to a binder named William Knorfke at another

[16] T.B. Peterson & Co. note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1884," 14-15, container 2.
[17] Wilhelm Hoffmann and Adolph Wittemann, *The Dresden Art Gallery*, 4 vols. (New York: Adolph Wittemannn, [188-?]), held by author. Images from volume four.

Fig. 10.2. *The Dresden Art Gallery* (ca. 188-?)

location. Knorfke placed four girls from his bindery staff of forty girls, women, and young men at work assembling 10,000 books.[18]

Comstock stopped the work while it was in progress and reported that he had seized the 180,000 pictures, twenty original plates, and 780 pounds of paper for its production. Wittemann paid a $200 fine, and his vendors, $50 each. The job may have been part of a larger scheme, however. In a separate listing in the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice arrest records, Comstock claimed to have seized from Knorfke

[18] William Knorfke, Adolph Wittemann, and Andrew H. Kellog entries, "Report of Persons Arrested…1888," container 2. Some people initially used the word "Albertype" to refer to a collotype process. Also, Anthony Comstock incorrectly spelled the New York photographer's name "Witterman."

twice that number of pictures, as well as twenty-four electrotypes and two forms of type weighing nearly one hundred pounds. They appear to have been involved in manufacturing more than just Wittemann's blank book.[19]

Comstock turned his attention to the author and publisher of a title carried by the Minerva Publishing Co. in New York in 1889. He arrested Telemachus Thomas Timayenis, a professor of foreign languages, for selling a now-obscure work titled *Unsatisfied*. That work apparently did not survive, in part because of the low-quality paper upon which Minerva books were published, but other texts by that author still exist, such as the anti-Semitic book, *The Original Mr. Jacobs: A Startling Exposé*. From the printer, J.J. Little & Co., Comstock confiscated 280 books, 20 books in printed sheets, and plates. He then pursued more books in the hands of Herbert Berry, a clerk for Minerva, seizing 565 American News Company copies and 197 of the book jobbing printer C.T. Dillingham. Comstock finally arrested the bookkeeper, as well.[20]

Telemachus was tried under New York state law in the spring of 1889 and received a $50 fine, as did his employees, for whom he paid the penalties. While such prosecutions had a chilling effect upon established firms but hastened the sales of otherwise unremarkable books. In 1891, the company continued to advertise *Unsatisfied*, indicating that the conviction had not forced Telemachus to destroy the book.[21]

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[19] The form weights and number of electrotypes point toward duodecimo production on the printer's press.
[20] Telemachus T. Timayenis entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1889," 16-17, container 2. The author's name is grossly misspelled in Comstock's entry. Telemachus Thomas Timayenis, *The Original Mr. Jacobs: A Startling Exposé* (New York: Minerva Publishing Co., 1888) and *Unsatisfied* (New York: Minerva Publishing Co., [1889]). A simply designed publisher's advertisement for *Unsatisfied* survives in Felix Dahn's *Attila the Hun* (New York: Minerva Publishing Co., 1891), held by author.
[21] Telemachus T. Timayenis entry, "Report of Persons Arrested…1889," 16-17, container 2. Publisher advertisements that are bound in books are not necessarily printed at the same time as the work in which they appear, but an advertisement in Felix Dahn's *Attila the Hun* (New York: The Minerva Publishing Company, 1891) is printed along with the text block and, therefore, dates to the book's actual publication. Held by author.

Two major reprinting firms that had just joined the United States Book Co. found their way into the arrest records in 1890. Founded in an attempt to overcome the devastating competition among publishers of cheap books, the trust grew aggressively for several years, buying or renting plates from major reprinters in a short-lived attempt to sustain the retail prices of books against steep discounts given to wholesale booksellers. Belford, Clark & Co. and George W. Dillingham both joined the combine in the summer of 1890, breaking ranks with other renegade reprinters in order to be part of establishing a more stable pricing system in the market. In October of the same year, Comstock attempted to prosecute them for the works they published on the side.[22]

The firm that Comstock noted as Belford & Co. operated a New York office of the Chicago firm of Belford, Clark & Co. The publisher had consulted with a lawyer and gained approval prior to printing *Bel-Ami*, Guy de Maupassant's work of the same name. Citing *Bel-Ami* as "a very obscene work," Comstock visited the offices at 18 and 20 East 18th St. and took away 120 pounds of books and 350 pounds of metal printing material. With such pressure applied against selling the book, Belford, Clark & Co. decided to allow its plates to be destroyed in order to avoid an arrest involving the firm. Despite the profits possible from the sales of the newly popular works of French realism writers, fighting Comstock was not worth the effort for Belford, Clark & Co.[23]

George W. Dillingham resisted Comstock's tactics, however. As successor to G.W. Carleton & Co., Dillingham could be counted among the larger reprinting firms during the 1880s. Published in the hundreds of thousands on cheap paper and bound with staples rather than sewn together with thread, Dillingham's Albatross Novels typified the

[22] Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing*, vol. 2, 349-352.
[23] Belford [Clark] & Co. note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1890," 188-189, container 2

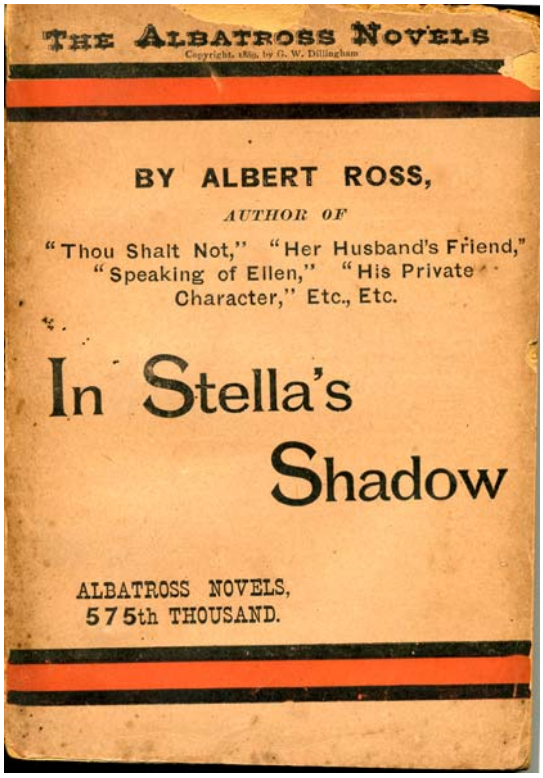

Fig. 10.3. *In Stella's Shadow* (1890)

reprinting techniques that undercut literary publishers. The firm's ad for the works of Albert Ross carried a critique from the *New York Evening Post* that proclaimed the author to be "the most typical purveyor of literature to the masses now living in this country."[24]

Writing under the name of Albert Ross, the Boston author and editor Lynn Boyd Porter contributed to the series at least one book that inspired complaints, according to Comstock. He informed the publisher that *In Stella's Shadow*, along with other publications, had been seized at the American News Company (fig. 10.3). From Dillingham's office at 33 W. 23rd St., he took 450 copies of the book and 226 pounds of plates from the shop. Dillingham fought back, perhaps in anger at having his establishment on a major book publishing street raided, but certainly because of the

[24] Lynn Boyd Porter [Albert Ross, pseud.], *In Stella's Shadow* (New York: G.W. Dillingham, 1890), held by author.

potential loss of investment. He won acquittal at trial, forcing Comstock to admit that the author would have to be prosecuted in order to suppress the book. As the great reprinting decades of the 1870s and 1880s came to a close, American authors had enough presence in the nation's literature to form yet another target for Comstock's prosecutions. Had the title been a foreign reprint, Comstock would have had no recourse.[25]

The trade expanded beyond the traditional publishing industry, and those producing illicit literature made use of innovations to further their ventures. "Ambitious human nature, restless under the restrictions of its environment, seeking in its philosophic research 'more worlds to conquer'" encouraged yet more methods for the production and distribution of obscene books, according to the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice. By 1891, the accessibility of diverse printing processes and the great demand for illicit literature had multiplied opportunities for morally dangerous reading.[26]

As an example, the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice noted that a particularly hideous publication had been found but could not be stamped out. The author's arrest and the ruin of confiscated books failed to stop others from quickly producing the same book. Printers made large profits from rapid sales but hid their involvement. "It was an appropriate work of darkness, typesetting and printing were done at night," according to the report. Although produced out of the public eye, at least six editions existed. Borrowing the book cost as much as an ordinary book. Those who could afford eight times the usual price of a book could make the evil work their own.[27]

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[25] George W. Dillingham note, appended after "Report of Persons Arrested…1890," 188-189, container 2. Comstock confuses the library of Albatross Novels with Albatross Library in his arrest records. See Linn Boyd Porter [Albert Ross], *In Stella's Shadow* (New York: G.W. Dillingham, 1890). Tebbel, *A History of Book Publishing*, vol. 2, 18 and 349. George W. Dillingham was successor to G.W. Carleton & Co. (462).
[26] *The Thirteenth Annual Report of the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice* (Cincinnati: Western Society for the Suppression of Vice, 1891), 1.
[27] *The Thirteenth Annual Report of the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice*, 1-2.

The Aftermath

By 1890, American publishers had endured the second great dislocation of the century from glutted markets for cheap books, and a consensus against Anthony Comstock's determined prosecutions began to arise in the industry. The nation's publishers rarely agreed about informal rules for competition, even with "courtesy of the trade" lingering as a convenient but hardly accurate maxim among publishers. Pirating works had simply been too profitable and easy a temptation for even the most upstanding firms always to refuse. Yet by the end of the 1880s, the worst of the reprinting wars had passed, and lessons could be drawn from the experience. Support for the formation of the United States Book Company signaled a new consensus among many reprinting firms. Their long-term interests lay in structuring prices rather than in discounting mass-produced books and in aligning their interests more with the trade than other renegade reprint houses. International copyright came to be an issue that unified rather than fragmented the majority of publishers.

Firms that heretofore had resisted an international copyright agreement at last realized that bringing stability to a saturated market for cheap books would reap greater rewards for individual firms than any momentary advantage gained from price wars. The supply of foreign works in demand had been printed too frequently to continue selling, leaving American publishers, save for a handful of those most active in volume reprinting, with no motive to oppose a copyright treaty. Those few failed to have enough power to keep the Berne Convention from being signed in 1890 and passed into law as the International Copyright Act in 1891.

Publishers also began consolidating views about the proper use of government power in support of their industry. They recognized a disjuncture between the efforts of moral reformers and the fundamental rights of Americans to laws and legal practices that reflected long-standing social values and constitutional protections. Anthony Comstock's methods appeared more and more to be those of a vigilante rather than a rational exercise of state power on behalf of citizens.[28]

At about the same time that American officials met with their counterparts from England, France, Germany, and other countries to hash out articles for the treaty, leaders of the publishing industry in the United States read a call to arms against allowing Anthony Comstock or other moral reformers to dictate to the book trades which items to sell. In *Publishers' Weekly*, an editor urged to readers the importance of determining the limits of censorship and a course of action. Comstock had encouraged Americans to lump together literary forms together, but, in fact, there were three types of literature to review, each requiring its own response from the book trades. Classical literature, such as Italian and French works that sometimes offended modern sensibilities, might contain "features, however offensive to us, [that] are an essential part of their literary being." Sales of these works could be restricted to specialists. Prosecution created markets for Emile Zola and other authors of realism who turned an artist's hand, with no pornographic intent, toward conveying the depths of human existence in sometimes unpleasant ways. The question facing booksellers was determining how appropriate that literature was to their own time.

[28] Harry N. Scheiber, "Regulation, Property Rights, and Definition of 'The Market': Law and the American Economy," *Journal of Economic History*, 41, no. 1, The Tasks of Economic History (March 1981): 103-109, quote from 109. For an overview of the new legal history, see Scheiber, "American Constitutional History and the New Legal History: Complementary Themes in Two Modes," *Journal of American History*, 68, no. 2 (Sept. 1981): 337-350; and "At the Borderland of Law and Economic History: The Contributions of Willard Hurst," *American Historical Review* 75 (1970): 744-761.

The so-called "moral exposé, however, deserved no such consideration. Filled with close descriptions of errant behavior, such books had the true purpose of titillation.[29]

Furthermore, those who acted as censors for the government were not public officials but representatives of vice societies not accountable to those outside of their organizations. "The new censors – for we have several now, rival guardians, indeed, of public morals – are self-appointed, practically irresponsible, irremovable, and yet are able to do much mischief…," wrote the editor. Coarse books that caused only repulsion rather than moral harm were no greater threat to readers than the literary books with low topics that usually eluded the censors. "The vogue of such books cannot last, and their sale is chiefly promoted by the free advertising they receive through such misdirected efforts to suppress them," according to the editor.[30]

Conclusion

A variety of publishers and booksellers participated in the manufacture and sale of indecent books. Free love iconoclast Calvin Blanchard challenged the moral authority of a government willing to send young men to die by the thousands but hostile to the sexual fulfillment of its citizens. Ordinary publishing firms sought to diversify their publishing lists, with the Hartford firm of Silas Andrus & Son producing anti-Catholic titles and classic foreign erotica alongside Bibles and essays by Harriet Martineau. The sales generated by the simple technique of renting or buying stereotyped plates for steady sellers, such as the medical works of Frederick Hollick, sustained the reprinting of certain books over decades with a variety of publisher names appended. The erotic canon

[29] "The Popular Sale of Objectionable Books," *Publishers' Weekly* (March 8, 1890), 353.
[30] "Modern Censorship," *The Publishers' Weekly* (Sept. 6, 1890), 271. *Publishers' Weekly* cites material published in a newspaper called the *Examiner* within the article.

described by historian Helen Horowitz evolved through the resonance of works as intellectual goods over time in commercial markets, with their continuity ensured in persistent physical forms by the technologies of print reproduction.

Publishers such as Calvin Blanchard embodied the ties between commerce, obscene literature, and freedom of the press. As a libertarian, he published works by Tom Paine as well as *Votary of a Pleasure*. The carnage of the Civil War and government corruption, not free love, were the most obscene facts of life in 1866, according to Blanchard. The idea that expressions of love might be considered abnormal, yet gruesome deaths on the battlefield acceptable, rankled Blanchard.[31] He sold his books in substantial publisher bindings, combining ideology with profit in an attractive volume that would have been at home in a middle-class American's personal library. Blanchard ceased publishing prior to Comstock's campaigns, leaving open the question of whether his philosophical diatribes would have been prosecuted successfully by the reformer.

Many additional publishers mixed ideology with commerce, most notably those offering anti-Catholic exposés, from Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk to *Auricular Confessions* and *The Extracts of Peter Dens*. More expensive type composition, better paper, higher quality illustrations, and established publishing firms attached themselves to such books. Enfolded in the most colorful wrappers or attractive cloth bindings, nativist erotica spread religious hate in the guise of promoting American values.

Others were not motivated by formal ideology but by enthusiasm for the sales that could be generated by connecting works to interest in urban culture and the sporting life. As in the case of William Berry, the simple prospect of profit provided all the lure needed

[31] Calvin Blanchard, *The Satyricon* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1866"), sections titled "Good" and "The Secret Unveiled."

to fulfill demand for the purported memoirs of courtesans or sensational fiction. During the antebellum period, Berry and others blatantly commercialized erotica, bringing it out into the open even while operating under false names, from frequently changing addresses, or as resellers of the works of other publishers.

Books sold to individuals became public through their circulation. Presented in the open until the late 1860s, they were seen as an affront to common law and a public nuisance by the authorities. Sent directly to readers through the mail, they relied upon the increasingly long reach of the post office to reach more customers. Some publishers continued to use private express companies or other methods of distribution, however. Vendors across the country sold erotica through networks of production that reached down from those who sold to the public to the papermakers whose innovations made publishing for large markets possible. Although many of the records of these entrepreneurs have not survived, bibliographical analysis of their remaining artifacts helps to reconstruct the ways in which they made possible the exchange of ideas about sexuality in the form of books in nineteenth-century America.

Anthony Comstock enthusiastically used his power as a special agent of the Post Office Department and as a representative of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice to eliminate indecent books. Yet the number of publishing networks and vendors against which he did moral battle far exceeds those cited in either his arrest records or those responsible for the titles cited by Henry Spencer Ashbee. The implementation of federal policies promoted so strongly by Anthony Comstock and others can be understood better through close examination of the context of technological development.

Through their technological choices and business practices, nineteenth-century American publishers mediated cultural transactions. Gaining information about technological practices underlying the wide availability of print is crucial to forming a body of knowledge for analyzing the forces that influenced the availability of literature, from that considered indecent to that subsequently esteemed.

Rather than being outsiders to social conventions as prosecution records, credit agents, and moral reformers have suggested, those involved in supplying erotic books operated in tandem with consumer demand and well within the bounds of market practices. Fixing ideas into physical forms took place amidst negotiations over technological access, the expansion of distribution systems, and the balancing of social and economic pressures. Understanding the evolution of the concept of obscenity in nineteenth-century America requires first analyzing how texts and pictures made their way into the hands of readers.

Documenting the variety of technical practices in America reveals specific moments of action that responded to demand for erotica within an environment bounded by technical, social, economic, and legal restraints. American-made books considered indecent in the mid- to late-nineteenth century should be studied as examples of business patterns, as social products that can be read in order to better understand technological change, and as cultural artifacts whose materiality influenced meanings beyond text.

The suppression of illicit books embodied a struggle for control over defining production considered to be American. Removing from the historical record the artifacts of systems producing illicit literature alters our knowledge of the history of American business. Actors and practices that do not fit within the late nineteenth-century

managerial capitalism of large firms often promoted as distinctively American thus have been largely omitted from the industry's history. Yet this perspective has neglected the role of government in structuring the environment in which industries develop.[32] Historians have barely begun to specify the ways in which American advances differed from other countries, perhaps distracted by the allure of complex machinery such as the Fourdrinier and volume pulp processes that appear to need no explanation for their superiority. With this dissertation, the distinguishing features of American production, distribution, and consumption of illicit literature have begun to be outlined.

Historians who wish to study the reception of illicit literature "from below" are hard pressed to find alternative sources of documentation in the form of diaries or surviving letters.[33] What has been missing from recent scholarship in print culture has been the material literally underneath and the processes making possible the production of erotic texts. The evidence of paper, illustrations, printing, and type is a valuable starting point for establishing the relationship of publishers to the market for – and readership of – racy books. This dissertation offers several methods for reconstructing data about the range of physical forms through which indecent books came into the hands of readers. Technical processes, themselves deeply influenced by economic relationships,

[32] Alfred D. Chandler Jr., *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977), 1. Philip Scranton provides a useful corrective to this perspective by showing how flexible production practices and relationships among members of production networks were a vital part of the industrial patterns giving strength of late nineteenth- and early twentieth century American business ventures. See Scranton, *Endless Novelty: Specialty Production and American Industrialization, 1865-1925* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997). Among many historians who have tracked such industrial patterns are Gerald Berk, John K. Brown, Glenn Porter, Charles Sabel, Robert Salais, Michael Storper, and Jonathan Zeitlin.

[33] A rare diary recording sexual activity during the nineteenth century has been studied by B.R. Burg, who draws out a narration of the life of an American sailor that reveals homoerotic activities on board sailing ships in the third quarter of the century. See *An American Seafarer in the Age of Sail: The Erotic Diaries of Philip C. Van Buskirk, 1851-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

federal policies, incremental innovation, and escalating consumer demand for print, are a fundamental aspect of the diversification of print in nineteenth-century America.

Those books cannot be studied if they have not survived, however. The ephemeral nature of popular books and the low standards to which they were produced heighten the difficulty of undertaking physical analysis. Correlating material processes with the broad category of erotic content makes clear that examples of erotica have been excluded from studies ensuring the survival of artifacts of American print culture. In certain ways, indecent books appear more evenly to represent the range of material processes within nineteenth-century American publishing than more frequently studied genres. The analysis of erotica thus salvages discarded information about nineteenth-century industry while opening new sources of knowledge for ensuring the continuity of the nation's priceless print heritage.

Many business historians have considered flexible production to be ancillary to American enterprise, much like how erotica came to be marginalized and seen as contrary to national progress in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Yet American papermaking practices are fundamental to explaining the growth of erotica and other types of print in the nineteenth century. Manufacturers overcame shortages by absorbing new materials as necessitated by demand and supply costs, constructing a receptive environment for experimentation. Non-destructive techniques appropriate to examining rare artifacts reveal that domestic fibers were a major, undocumented resource for the industry. Flexible production practices and incremental innovation helped papermakers to balance material supplies, labor, demand, and capital investments.

Between George Shryock's preliminary work with straw in the late 1820s and more widely-known experiments with straw paper in the 1850s, Americans produced at least limited quantities of straw printing paper. A single surviving copy of *The New York Sporting Whip* shows that Americans experimented successfully with alternative processes well before the 1850s. Turning to domestically available materials and responding to the pull of market demand and push of government policies, papermaking practices laid the groundwork for further developments with wood fibers and chemical processes. Rather than a period devoid of trials or characterized only by mimicry of foreign methods, the decades before 1850 – like those just afterward – provide evidence that Americans creatively sought out domestic sources for machinery, fibers, and chemicals every bit as diverse as the cultural goods printed upon American paper.

The details about straw production embedded in technical manuals have not before been integrated into a larger, accessible history of American papermaking. Yet rewriting that history is necessary to explain the prevalence of yellow-wrappered books during the nineteenth century. Historians of print culture have long noted that yellow hues dominated the covers of cheaper publications. Economic incentives and technical roadblocks helped to drive the decision of publishers to employ visually striking but second-grade paper for wrappers. Non-rag fibers made that choice profitable.

Books can provide clues to the anticipated expectations of readers and reveal the technical and artistic limitations that American publishers faced. By linking illustrations to publisher strategies, it is possible to learn about the intended audiences for a given book, the work practices of nineteenth-century printers, and the technologies most closely associated to production of indecent books. The choices made by publishers mirrored the

place of specific firms in the printing industry. The study of illustrations makes clear that American producers of indecent books were not outsiders to their trade. On the contrary, they were part and parcel of the printing industry, as diverse in their capabilities as the range of techniques in America was broad.

In many ways, the variegated structure of the printing industry, combining mass production with niche manufacturing, echoes what is known of the indecent book trade. Hoe's cylinder press was vital to the business strategies of "penny press" publishers who sold huge numbers of low-cost newspapers during the 1830s and later. Yet the competing Adams power press printed most American books from the mid-1830s to about 1880, and previously no historian has explored the social implications of that machine's capabilities and the work practices associated with it. Indecent books therefore offer examples that enrich the study of American printing and publishing history.

Stereotyping as a national practice helped to ensure the popularity of the Adams power press, and the reproduction of type forms through stereotyped plates offers an important key to learning about barely documented networks of production. Reprinting upon demand lowered the investment risk of volume production. Stereotyping also made labor and capital transferable as metal plates. In the context of a growing market for print, the variety of production techniques and complexity of networks testifies to the profitability of the trade in indecent books. Closely analyzing the technologies involved helps historians to estimate profit levels rather than assuming them.

Through a commercial marketplace with regional and, later, national overtones, publishers linked authors to readers. Publishers financed networks of printers, typesetters, illustrators, binders, and booksellers, dealing with producers, distributors, and sometimes

consumers. In coordinating the content, production, and distribution of books, publishers served as a key link between the nation's readers and industrial development. In defining the parameters of cost, networks of production, and distribution potential for print, they influenced the physical shapes and availability of cultural goods.[34]

Selling illicit books commercially brought into the public sphere ideas and cultural undercurrents that challenged the vision of a single moral standard guiding the behavior of consumers toward the sustenance of a virtuous republic. Commerce became a conversation between vendors and buyers, with rippling effects produced by, and in, the spaces and distribution systems in which sales took place, as well as through the new connections made between readers and among publishers and consumers.

Indecent books indeed found ready purchasers. The books that Americans bought from booksellers indicated a desire for reading materials whose content, availability, and forms opened avenues for reconciling aspirations for individual success with knowledge about the boundaries of community order. Getting from the artifact to the reader is a difficult task, but marketing strategies of publishers anticipated specific markets. "Books as well as texts suggest, beckon, even posit an audience," according to Nancy Cook.[35]

The technologies used to produce print culture are a vital link in understanding how Americans balanced conflicting social identities in nineteenth-century America. Abundant opportunities for personal advancement often isolated individuals from their communities of origin and forced engagement with new values, institutions, and

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[34] See Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" *Daedalus* 111 (Summer 1982): 65-83; and Michael Winship, "Publishing in America: Needs and Opportunities for Research," in *Needs and Opportunities in the History of the Book: America, 1630-1876*, ed. David D. Hall and John B. Hench (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1987).

[35] Nancy Cook, "Finding His Mark: Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* as a Subscription Book," in Moylan and Stiles, eds., *Reading Books*, 151-178, esp. 152.

environments. Consuming erotica represented one way of mediating the unruly tensions of Victorian society. Print culture allowed Americans to individuate themselves while associating with new social strata.[36]

Historians of sexuality have focused on the texts of these books, in much the same way that historians generally show the most interest in the textual communication of meaning. Yet it was domestic production, from the making of paper through the persistence of stereotyped printing matter, that first made these works American and prepared the ground for American authorship to flourish. Recovering information from artifacts can reconstitute facts about how erotica fit into the American publishing trades, while also enhancing the source materials for historians to undertake broader studies of the spread of print culture.

For making it possible to write the history of nineteenth-century American erotica, we primarily have collectors to thank. Just as the illicit messages of erotica have made examples rare, those nineteenth-century works that have survived have been kept from harm because of their content. Until recent efforts to diversify holdings by institutional holders such as research libraries, collectors have sought out specific books for very different reasons than those who acquired items as historical documents. As iconic forms, rare books and manuscripts have appealed to collectors who desire to own an *original*, writes rare book dealer and historian William S. Reese. “In their eyes, a book of great rarity may have more value than a book with a text of great merit,” argues Reese.

[36] Georg Simmel’s analysis of the role of fashion in society at the beginning of the twentieth century reaches conclusions pertinent to erotica in the preceding century. See Simmel, “Fashion,” in *American Journal of Sociology* 62 (1957): 541-558. Originally published in 1904 in *International Quarterly*.

Such considerations shape "what they choose to buy and consider important, what they compile bibliographies of and, to a degree, what is ultimately available for study."[37]

The choice of what to keep and what to discard is an act of writing history, as is the recovery of information about the technological practices and business strategies of publishers from artifacts. Through examples drawn from illicit literature, historians can construct techniques for recovering information about the business practices of publishers whose marketplace approaches have been marginalized and assess the correct place of those entrepreneurs in American history. Indecent books offer evidence of the technological practices that made possible a domestic trade in erotica; they also highlight the dangers of accepting simplistic trajectories in either technology or literature. Erotica can be a guide for creating more accurate assessments of the forces that influenced the availability of and forms taken by indecent books in America. Those forms and the practices producing them mediated ideas and shaped the experiences of Americans. Identifying the means and forms by which readers came into possession of books is a first step by which the role of indecent literature in the lives of Americans readers can be deciphered.

[37] William S. Reese, "Searching for New Sources in Western History," *Yale University Library Gazette* 67, nos. 3-4 (April 1993), accessed at William Reese Company, "Papers and Talks About Books and Book-Collecting," <http://www.reeseco.com/papers/paper.htm>, Aug. 6, 2005.

Appendix A. Twenty-Five Samples Associated with Erotic Books, 1840-1890

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
1844 ***Physiology of the Wedding Night*** (108) Charles Chabot [M. Octavius de St. Ernest], Physiology of the Wedding Night (Boston: [s.n.], 1844). 1/Prose/Sexual education/--/America	No wrapper Text p17, signed 2	1	2	1	.11 [.12]	aged white	44#T
1845 ***Harriette Wilson*** (59) Harriette Wilson, Intrigues of a Woman of Fashion (New York: Published and for sale by the Booksellers, 1845). 2/Historical memoir/Amours/England/England	Wrapper *cloudy	3*	2	1	.11	off white	
	Frontis, Wd Eng *chemical tone	3	2	1	.11	brown*	
	Internal Ill, Wd Eng *chemical tone	3	2	1	.11	brown*	
	Text p19, unsigned	2	3	1	.11 [.10]	off white	44#T
1849 ***The Child of Nature*** (33) The Child of Nature Improved by Chance…. (New York: [s.n.], 1849). 3/Fiction/Amours/England/France	Wrapper	2	2	1	.13-.14	aged white	
	Frontis, Wd Eng	2	2	1	.11-.12	aged white	
	Text p17, signed 2*	2	2	1	.09-.10	beige white	36-40#T
1850 ***Julia King*** (70) The Author, Julia King, or, The Follies of My Life (New York: Printed for the Publisher, [1850]). 4/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	No wrapper						
	Frontis, Lith	2	2	1	.19-.20	thick white	
	Text p21, signed 2 *2 integral shives	3	2	1*	.07	beige white	28#T
1851 ***Boxing Without a Master*** (NOL) Owen Swift, Boxing Without a Master, or, Scientific Art and Practice of Attack and Self Defence [sic] (Boston: William Berry & Co., 1851). 5/Instruction/Pugilism, sporting/England/ England	No wrapper						
	Text p27, unsigned	3	2	1	.10 [.11]	beige white	40#T
	Text p29, unsigned	2	3	1/2	.10 [.11]	aged white	40#T

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
1851 ***The Countess*** (40) *The Countess: or, Memoirs of Women of Leisure: Being a series of Intrigues with the bloods, and a faithful delineation of the private frailties of our first men….* (Boston: W. Berry & Co., [1851]). 6/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	Wrapper *jute-like shives	2	2	1*	.11	beige	
	Frontis missing						
	Text p17, signed 2	2	2	2	.08-.09	aged white	32-36#T
1851 The Irish Widow (67) *Joseph Méry, The Irish Widow, or, The Last of the Ghosts* (Boston: William Berry & Co., 1851). 7/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	No wrapper						
	Frontis, Lith	2	1	-	.09-.10	aged white	
	Text	2	3	1,2,3	.08-.09	beige white	
1853 Adolene, the Female Adventurer (1) *Herself, Adolene Wellmont; or the Female Adventurer.…* (New York: George W. Hill, 1853). 8/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	Wrapper	2	1	-	.10 [.9-.11]	blue (dye)	
	Text *golden chemical blob shive	2	2	1*	.09	off white	36#T
185-? The Ladies Garter (NOL) George Thompson [Greenhorn], *The Ladies Garter* (New York: Howland & Co., [185-?]). 9/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	No wrapper						
	Frontis, Lith *medium-dark brown shives	2	2	1*	.09 [.10]	beige	
	Text	2	3	1,3	.11 [.10]	off white	44#T
185-? The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin (NOL) *Herself, The Life and Adventures of Cicily Martin.* (New York: Sinclair & Bagley, 1846). 10/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	No wrapper						
	Frontis, Colrd Eng	2	2	1	.13	aged white	
	Text p9, signed B *soft, high bulk sheet for signature, possibly copperplate paper	2	2	1	.15 [.16]*	aged white	unknown

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
185-? Mary Ann Temple (92) Paul de Kock, *Mary Ann Temple: Being an Authentic and Romantic History of an Amorous and Lively Girl* … (New York: [s.n.], 185-?]. 11/Fictional memoir/Amours/America/America	Wrapper *1 integral shive	1	2	1*	.14 [.13]	yellow (dye)	
	Frontis missing						
	Text	2	3	2*	.08-.09	aged white	32-36#T
1854 The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia (18) *The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia: Being the Intrigues and Amours of a Jesuit and a nun…* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith & Co. [Frederic A. Brady], [1854]). 12/Fiction/Anti-Catholic/France, England/France	Frontis, Eng *slightly aged	1	1	-	.15-.16	white*	
	Text 1 *also internal shives; probably calendared	2	3*	2	.10	beige white	40#T
	Ill p 68/69, Eng *high opacity; thinner bottom, thicker top	1*	1	-	.17-.19*	white	
	Ill p 86/87, Eng *internal flaws and large-long shives	2*	2	1*	.09-.10	off white	
	Ill p 98/99, Eng * translucent (see Munsell's 1856 sample)	2	2	1	.07-.08	yellow*	
	Ill p 154/155, Eng (chin-collé)						
	Backing	1	1	-	.24-.25	white	
	Tissue	2	2	1	.6-.7	beige white	
	Backing & Tissue *inked areas measure .35 mm				.31*		

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
1854 Secret Habits (NOL) Jean Dubois, M.D. *The Secret Habits of the Female Sex: Letters addressed to a mother on the evils of solitude, and its seductive temptations to young girls…* (Philadelphia: Sold by the Booksellers Generally [186-?]). 13/Fiction/Sexual Education/--/[America?]	Wrapper	3	2	1	07-.09	yellow (dye)	*VMT, thin
	Frontis1, Col Lith *black inorganic matter present	3	1	-*	.09-.10	aged white	
	Frontis 2, Col Lith	2	1	-	.09-.10	aged white	
	Text p. 13, signed 2 *jute-like strands	3	3	1/2*	.09-.10	beige white	36-40#T
	Ill p128/129, Col Lith *1 internal shive	2*	1	-	.08 [.09]	white	
185/6- The Life of Kate Hastings (78) Amy Morton, *The Life and Death of Kate Hastings…* (New York: Henry S.G. Smith [185- or 186-]). 14/Fiction/Amours/France/America	No wrapper						
	Text p17, unsigned *small VMT; large and long shives	2*	3	1,2,3*	.11 [.12]	beige white	44#T
1857 The Mysteries of Bond Street (103) *The Mysteries of Bond Street; or, The Seraglios of Upper Tendom* (New-York: [s.n.], 1857). [AAS holds two identical copies; less fragile examined.] 15/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	No wrapper						
	Text p9, signed 2* *light VMT; shives like 19 but smaller	2	3	1*	0.9	beige white	36#T
1859 Isabel (NOL) *Isabel: or, The Intrigues of the Court of Aragon* (New York: Published for the Trade, 1859). 16/Fiction/Historical amours/Spain/ [America?]	No wrapper						
	Text p17, signed 3 *1 medium brown shive	2	2	1*	.10 [.09]	off white	40#T

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
1860 The Loves of Cleopatra (85) Appolonius of Gotham, *The Loves of Cleopatra: or, Mark Anthony & His Concubines: A Historical Tale of the Nile* ([New York]: Published for the Trade, 1860). 17/Fiction/Historical amours/Roman Empire/[America]	No wrapper						
	Text p17, signed 2 *shives like 19 but smaller	2	3	1*	.08 [.07]	beige white	32#T
1861 Amorous Intrigues of Aaron Burr (10) *The Amorous Intrigues and Adventures of Aaron Burr* (New York: Published for the Proprietors, [ca. 1861]). 18/Fiction/Historical amours/America/ America	Text p19, not signed *rip internal to sheet; also square shives	2	3	1*	.07-.08	beige white	28-32#T
	(1.0x1.0mm.); blue, red, and other fibers						
[1864-69] Fast Life (51) *Fast Life in London and Paris: Including a Spirited Detail of the Life and Amours of the Famous Marquis of Waterford* (New York: Frederic A. Brady, [1864-1869].) 19/Fiction/Sporting life/England, France/ England?	Wrapper *medium brown jute-like fibers; glazed	2	2	1*	.13 [.14]	chem. tan*	
	Text p19, unsigned *2 small holes	2	2	1	.11-.12	chem. beige	44-50#T
[1864-69] The Outlaw (106) George Thompson [Greenhorn], *The Outlaw, or, The Felon's Fortunes* (New York: F.A. Brady, [1864-69]). 20/Fiction/Sensational/America/America	Wrapper *good opacity	2*	1	-	.13 [.12]	beige white	
	Text	2	2	1	08-.09	white	32-36#T
1866 Satyricon (NOL) Petronius Arbiter, *The Satyricon; or, Trebly Voluptuous* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1866"). 21/Prose/Historical erotica/ Roman Empire/Rome [Latin]	Fly Leaf *VMT	2*	3	2	.09	yellow (dye)	
	Text p 15, unsigned	2	2	1	.11	aged white	44#T
1866 Secret History of a Votary of Pleasure (NOL) Calvin Blanchard, *Secret History of a Votary of Pleasure: His Own Confessions* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, 1866). [Identical to leaves bound with Life Among the Nymphs (New York: 1867), below.] 22/Prose/Free love/--/America	Frontis *VMT	2*	3	2	.09	yellow (dye)	
	Text p15, unsigned	2	2	1	.11	aged white	44#T

Year *Title* (Ashbee List) American Antiquarian Society Citation. No./Genre/Theme/National Setting/Author's Origin	**Paper Examined**	**Sheet Form.**	***Shives*** **Obs.**	***Shives*** **Size**	**Thick. (mm.)**	**Color**	**Est. Wt.**
1867 Life Among the Nymphs (NOL) Calvin Blanchard, *Life Among the Nymphs: A New Excursion through the Empire of Venus* (New York: Calvin Blanchard, "1867"). [Contains several Blanchard works bound as one, including The Art of Real Pleasure (New York: 1864); Human Nature Unveiled (New York: 1865); and Secret History of a Votary of Pleasure (New York: 1866).] 23/Prose/Free love/--/America	Title Page	2	2	1,2	.09	aged white	36#T
	Frontis	2	2	1	.08-.07	yellow (dye)	
	Text p.22 (Poem)	2	3	1	.13	aged white	56#T or 36-40#T w/ high bulk
	Secret History of a Votary of Pleasure* *physically identical to separate issue						
	Text p15, unsigned	2	2	1	.11	aged white	44#T
	Ill following TP 2* *good opacity; thickness varies widely	2*	1	1	.13 [.12-.14]*	yellow (dye)	
	The Tell-Tale; Queer Secrets Let Out						
	Ill	2	2	1	.07-.08	yellow	28-32#
1875 Ancient Symbol Worship (19) Hodder M. Westropp, *Ancient Symbol Worship: Influence of the Phallic Idea in the Religions of Antiquity*, 2nd ed. (New York: J.W. Bouton, 1875). 24/Anthropology/Phallicism/Antiquity/ England	No wrapper						
	Frontis, Lith *high opacity	1*	1	-	.12	aged white	
1888 Romance of Chastisement (NOL) St. George Henry Stock, *The Romance of Chastisement; or, Revelations of the School and Bedroom.* By an Expert (Boston: Tremont Publishing Co., 1876 [London: Avery, 1888]). 25/Prose/Flagellation/England/England	Frontis, Col Litho *high opacity, finely stitched wire seam	1	1	-	.13-.14	aged white	50#T
	Text p15, unsigned	2	1	-	.12	off white	50#T

Notes:

All items are from the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. Leaf rectos were examined, as indicated by single page numbers. Dual page references note leaves for which examination of both pages was necessary, due to illustration or ink coverage. Items were selected from those listed by Ashbee and found as American imprints (Appendix B) except those noted as NOL (not on Ashbee list), which are closely associated with such works. Thickness was measured at a minimum of five points per leaf. Variant measures occurring once or twice have been bracketed after the main reading; papers with nearly split measures are written as .08-.09.

The following abbreviations refer to the printing processes employed: Lith (Lithograph), Eng (Engraving), Wd Eng (Wood Engraving), Colrd (Hand Colored), Col (Printed in Color). Abbreviations relating to papermaking include: VMT (vatman's tear), # (pounds basis weight, calculated upon a standard 24" x 38" sheet size), and T (denotes text paper, which is used for printing and carries a different surface finishing than writing paper). Paper defects called "pin holes" have been referred to as "small holes" in order to avoid confusion with the printing term of the same name.

Shive sizes are measured as 2.0 x 0.3 mm or greater = large; 1.0 x 0.2 mm to less than 2.0 x 0.3 mm = medium; and 0.5 x 0.2 mm to less than 1.0 x 0.2 mm = small. Smaller items are visually unidentifiable and too insignificant to be considered flaws in the finished paper. All shives are golden brown to light brown with an organic, fibrous appearance, unless specified. All paper is wove finish.

1
Adolene, *the Female Adventurer*
Held by AAS as Adolene Wellmont; or the Female Adventurer

CLT 220*; Hawley copyright; Hawley PA

2
Adventures of a Country Girl; *or, Gay Scenes in my Life*

CLT 236*, Hawley PA

3
The Adventures of a French Bedstead, *&c.*

CLT 149-150, 229 note; Dennis; Hawley PA

4-P
The Adventures of Anna P. *the Belle of New York*

CLT xxxi-xxxii note, 163-164; publisher's prospectus

5
Adventures of a Sofa; *or, Drawing-Room Intrigues*

CLT 221*

6
The Adventures of Don Pedro *in search of a wife*

CLT 233-234*; Hawley PA as Don Pedro in Search of a Wife

7
Alice Wade; *or, the Seducer's Fearful Doom*

CLT 235*; Hawley PA

8
Amelia Moreton; *or, Life at a Fashionable Watering Place*

CLT 236*

9
Amorous Adventures of Lola Montes

CLT 220*

10
Amorous Intrigues of Aaron Burr

CLT 237*; Wright II, 61

11
Amorous Songster

Held by BECPL (seen as Evans 36834)

CLT 200*

12
The Amours of a Man of Leisure; *or, The Charming Young Man*

CLT 235*; Hawley PA as *The Amours of a Man of Leisure* and *The Charming Young Man*

13
Amours of a Modest Man

CLT 199-200

14
The Amours of a Musical Student: *being A Development of the Adventures and Love Intrigues of A Young Rake, with Many Beautiful Women. Also Showing The Frailties of the Fair Sex, and their Seductive Powers*

CLT xxxii note as *Amours Intrigues and Adventures of a Musical Student*, 229-232 as listed; *Dennis as The Musical Student*; Hawley PA as *Adventures of a Musical Student*

15
The Amours of a Quaker; *or, the Voluptuary*

CLT 236*; ILP 45

16
Amours of an American Adventurer *in the New World and the Old.*

CLT 163-164

17
The Amours of Lady Augusta Clayton: *being the amorous history of one of the first ladies in England; showing how vice can be countenanced in the first circles of society.*

CLT 233*; Hawley PA

18
The Amours of Sainfroid and Eulalia: *being the intrigues and amours of a Jesuit and a Nun; developing the Progress of Seduction of a highly educated young lady, who became, by the foulest Sophistry and Treachery, the Victim*

of Debauchery and Libertinism.

Held by AAS, Kinsey Institute

ILP 64-70, CLA 239-253, CLT 234*; Dennis; Hawley PA

19
Ancient Symbol Worship. *Influence of the Phallic Idea in the Religions of Antiquity*

Held by author; 1875 printing by author, UVA

ILP 71

20
Anna Mowbray; *or, Tales of the Harem*

Partial copy held by Duke (Wright II, 2477)

CLT 219

21
Aphrodisiacs and Anti-aphrodisiacs: *Three Essays on the Powers of Reproduction; with some account of the Judicial "Congress" as practised in France during the Seventeenth Century.*

Held by author (spine reads Davenport's Essays)

ILP 82-87, CLA 445 note, 445-446; Hawley PA

22
Asmodeus; *or, the Iniquities of New York*

Held by AAS as advance copy bound in with New York Life

CLT 235*

23
Auricular Confession and Nunneries

Held by AAS

CLA 129-134.

24
Awful Disclosures *by Maria Monk, of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal; with An Appendix; and A Supplement giving more particulars of the nunnery and grounds. Illustrated by a plan of the nunnery, &c. Second Edition, Revised, by The Rev. J. J. Slocum, of New York.*

Held by numerous institutions: AD: Howe & Bates, 1836; AD: Hoisington & Trow, 1836, Review AD: G. Vale, 1836; Escape…& Decisive Confirmation: Office of the Downfall of Babylon, 1836; AD: T.B. Peterson, nd; Refutation: Howe & Bates 1836

CLA 149-156

25
The Bar Maid of the Old Point-House. *&c.*

ILP 117, CLA 229 note; Hawley PA

26
Bedlarks; *or How to Do It*

CLT 200*

27
The Bridal Chamber, *and its Mysteries: or, Life at Our Fashionable Hotels*

Held on microfilm but segment "not available"

CLT 218; Wright II, 2479; Hawley copyright

28
Cabinet of Venus Unlocked

CLT 264-266; Hawley PA

29
The California Widow; *or Love, Intrigue, Crime, and Fashionable Dissipation*

CLT 220*

30
Cerisette; *or, the Amours of an Actress*

CLT 235*; Hawley PA

31
Charles the Second, Earl of Rochester, and Buckingham's Intrigues

Contains both *Charles the Second and the Earl of Rochester* and *The Adventures and Intrigues of the Duke of Buckingham*

CLT 237*; Dennis

32
The Chevalier; *a thrilling tale of Love and Passion*

CLT 236*; Hawley copyright; Hawley PA

33
The Child of Nature; *or, the History of a Young Lady of Luxurious Temperament and Prurient Imagination, ….*

Held by AAS as *The Child of Nature Improved by Chance*

CLT xxxii note, xxxiii note, 234*, 343

34
Le Citateur. Par Pigault-Lebrun. *&c.*

Held by LOC, author

CLA 487

35
The Confessional Unmasked, *or the Curiosities of Romish Devotion*

Held by AAS and various institutions as variants of Extracts of Peter Dens' Theology

CLA 88-109

36
Confessions of a Ladies' Waiting Maid; *or The Veil Uplifted*

CLT xxxii note, 179-180, 235*; Hawley PA

37
The Confessions of a Voluptuous Young Lady *of High Rank*

CLT 304-306; Dennis

38
Confessions of Julia Drake

CLT 237*

39
The Coquette of Chestnut Street

CLT 220*; Hawley PA

40
The Countess; *or, My Intrigues with the Bloods*

Held by Yale, AAS

CLT 236*; Wright I, 2583; Hawley copyright; Hawley PA

41
The Criminal, *or the Adventures of Jack Harold*

Held by Huntington as advance copy bound in with *Life and Exploits of Bristol Bill* (1851).

CLT 221*; Hawley copyright (*Jack Harold, Or, The Criminal's Career*)

42
Curiositates Eroticæ Physiologiæ; *or, Tabooed Subjects Freely Treated. In Six Essays, viz.: 1. Generation. 2. Chastity and Modesty. 3. Marriage. 4. Circumcision. 5. Eunuchism. 6. Hermaphrodism, and followed by a closing Essay on Death*

Held by various locations (not seen)

ILP 174-184

43
The Curtain drawn up or the Education of Laura

CLT 296-298; Broun and Leech; Dennis; Hawley PA

44
The Dark Side of New York Life *and its Criminal Classes from Fifth Avenue down to the Five Points. A Complete Narrative of the Mysteries of New York*

Held by AAS as bound serial and LOC as book

ILP 188

45-na
The Delights of Love; *or, The Lady Libertine*

Held on microfilm but segment "not available"

CLT 203-209; Wright II, 2482

46
A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, *and its connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients*

Held by various locations (not seen)

ILP 3-12

47
Evil Genius; *or, The Spy of the Police*

Held by Yale

CLT 236*; Hawley copyright

48
Exhibition of Female Flagellants, *in the Modest & Incontinent World, Proving from indubitable Facts that a number of Ladies take a secret Pleasure in whipping their own, and Children committed [sic] to their care, and that their Passion for exercising and feeling the Pleasure of a Birch-Rod, from Objects of their Choice of both Sexes, is to the full as Predominant as that of Mankind*

ILP 240-241

49
The Fancy Man

CLT 237*; Hawley PA

50
Fanny Greeley: *or, Confessions of a Free-love Sister*

CLT 210-217; copyright; Hawley PA

51
Fast Life in London and Paris

CLT 237*; Wright II, 2436; Hawley PA

52
The Female Roué

CLT 237*; Hawley PA

53
The Festival of Love; *or, Revels at the Fount of Venus, Disclosed in a Series of Luscious Dialogues and Amatory Letters between Flora and the Voluptuous Aldabella*

CLT 166-168; Hawley PA as *The Two Cousins*

54
Flora Montgomerie, *the Factory Girl: Tale of the Lowell Factories.*

Held by American Textile History Museum

CLT 227-228

55
The Gay Deceiver; *or, Man's Perfidy and Woman's Frailty*

CLT 220*
56
Gay Girls of New York; *or, Life in the Metropolis*

Held by UVA
CLT 220*; Wright II, 2483; Hawley copyright

57
The Gay Grisettes

CLT 235*

58
Guide to the Harem, *or Directory in New York And Various Other Cities for 1855.*

Held by private collector

CLT 341 (Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty-Five); Dennis (Guide to the Harem)

59
Harriet Wilson; *or, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*

Held by AAS

CLT 235*, 236*.

60
Harry Glindon, *the Man of Many Crimes*

Held by NYPL

CLT 220*; Wright II, 2484

61
Henry; *or, Life of a Libertine*

CLT 235*

62
The History of a Rake; *or, the Adventures, Amours, and Intrigues of a General Lover, or Ladies' Gentleman*

Held by AAS under alternate title

CLT xxxii note, 235*; Dennis

63
History of the Rod

Subtitled *Flagellation & the Flagellants*

ILP 415-422

64
How to Raise Love: *or Mutual Amatory Series [sic]; Disclosed in a Series of Letters, between Two Cousins*

CLT 147-149; Dennis (How to Raise Love)

65
The Intrigues and Secret Amours of Napoleon

CLT 234*; Dennis.

66
The Intrigues of Three Days *&c.*

CLT 229 note; Dennis

67
The Irish Widow; *or, The last of the Ghosts*

Held by AAS

CLT 236*

68
John, *the Darling of the Ladies*

CLT 235*

69
Julia: *or, where is the Woman that would'nt &c.[sic]*

Held by AAS if *Julia; or The Adventures of a Singular Girl* is same

CLT 229fn; Dennis

70
Julia King: *or, The Follies of a Beautiful Courtezan*

Held by AAS

CLT 220*; Hawley copyright

71
Julia Maxwell; *or, The Miseries of Brooklyn*

CLT 220*; copyright as The Miseries of Brooklyn

72
Jus Primae Noctis: *Eine geschichtliche Untersuchung. Von Dr. Karl Schmidt, Oberlandesgerichsrath zu Colmar i.E. Freiburg im Breisgau. Herder'sche Verlagshandlung*
Held by author

CLT 26-28

73
Kate Castleton, *the Beautiful Milliner*

Held by AAS, LOC

CLT 220*; Wright II, 2485; Hawley copyright (English and German titles)

74
Kate Montrose; *or The Maniac's Daughter*

CLT 220*

75
The Lady in Flesh Coloured Tights

CLT 235*

76
The Lame Devil; *or, Asmodeus in Boston*

CLT 236*

77
The Life and Amours of Kate Percival

CLT xxxii note; Dennis as Life and Amours of the Beautiful, Gay and Dashing Kate Percival, the Belle of the Delaware; Broun and Leech

78
The Life of Kate Hastings

Held by AAS

CLT 220*

79
The Love Feast; *or, A Bride's Experience*

Held by Kinsey Institute (not seen)

CLT 200*

80
Love in a Maze; *or, The Adventures of Bouncing Bet*

CLT 200*; similar title to Wright II, 855; Dennis

81
Love on the Loose; *or, The Carnivals of Venice*

CLT 200*; Dennis

82
Love on the Sly

CLT xxxiii note; Broun and Leech

83
Love Scrapes; *or, Gay Times in a Boarding House*

CLT 200*

84
The Loves of Byron, *his Intrigues with Celebrated Women*

CLT xxxiii note, 236*

85
The Loves of Cleopatra: *or, Mark Anthony & his Concubines. A Historical Tale of the Nile*

Held by AAS

CLT 221-227

86
The Loves of the Harem

CLT xxxiii note

87
The Lustful Turk

CLT 134-136; Broun and Leech; Dennis; Hawley PA

88
Madeline, *the Avenger; or Seduction and its Consequences*

CLT 236*

89
Marie de Clairville; *or, The confessions of a Boarding School Miss*

CLT 221*

90
The Marriage Bed, *or Wedding Secrets Revealed by the Torch of Hymen*

Held by AAS as *The Marriage Bed; or, Wedding Secretes Revealed by the Torch of Hymen. Being a Full Explanation of All the Matrimonial Duties of Both [Br]ide and Bridegroom on the Eventful Night*

CLT xxxiii note; Dennis as *The Marriage Bed, or Wedding Secrets.*

91
The Married Maid

CLT 237*; Hawley PA

92
Mary Ann Temple; *or, Life of an Amorous Girl*

Held by AAS

CLT 235*; Dennis

93
A Master-Key to Popery

Held by AAS

CLA 112-121, 196-197, 261-264, 418

94
Melting Moments; *or, Love Among the Roses*

CLT 99-102, 235*

95
Memoirs of a Man of Pleasure; *or, the Amours, Intrigues, and Adventures, of Sir Charles Manley*

CLT 121-124; Dennis

96
Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure

Held by AAS in several forms, including sheets of an interrupted printing

CLT 60-91, 235*; Dennis (several title variants; the most unusual being *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure or the Singular and Surprising Adventures of Thermidore and Rozette*); Broun and Leech

97
Memoirs of an Old Man of Twenty[-Five??]

Held by private collector

CLT 341; Hawley PA; Dennis (partial title)

98
Memoirs of the public and private life of Napoleon Bonaparte

Held by AAS

CLT 234*; Hawley PA

99
The Merry Order of St. Bridget *Personal Recollections of The Use of the Rod*

ILP 305, 305-311, 305-306; CLA 467-468

100
Merry Wives of London; *a Picture of Licentiousness of the Court*

Held by Assumption College

CLT 236*

101
The Mysteries and Iniquities of a Private Madhouse

CLT 237*

102
Mysteries and Myseries of Philadelphia

Held by AAS

CLT 220*; Wright II, 2488a

103
The Mysteries of Bond Street; *or, The Seraglios of Upper Tendom*

Held by AAS

CLT 219-220; Wright II, 2489

104
The Mysteries of Venus *or, Lessons of Love: exemplified in the Amatory Life and Adventures of Kitty Pry.*

Held by Kinsey Institute

CLT xxxiii note, xxxiv note, 171-175, 314, 404

105
New York Life; *or Mysteries of Upper-tendom Revealed*

Held by AAS

CLT 235*

106
The Outlaw, *or, The Felon's Fortunes, a Sequel to The Criminal.*

Held by AAS, BECPL, Huntington, NYPL, UVA

CLT 221*; Wright II, 2490

107
Paul the Profligate; *or, Paris as it is*

Held by Yale University

CLT 236*

108
Physiology of the Marriage Night

Held by AAS

CLT xxxiii note

109
The Priest, The Woman, and The Confessional

Held by Emory University

CLA 137-144, 438

110
Radcliff; *or the Adventures of a Libertine*

CLT 220*

111
The Rakish Rhymer; *or, Fancy Man's Own Songster*

CLT 200*

112
Redstaff; *or, The Mysterious Lover*

CLT 200

113
Revenge, *a Tale of Deep, Mysterious, and Great Crime*

Held by BECPL and Huntington as advance copies
CLT 237*

114
The Road to Ruin: *or Felon's Doom—the End of the Series*

CLT 221*; Wright II, 2491

115
La Rose d'Amour; *or, the Adventures of a Gentleman in Search of Pleasure*

CLT 161-163, 343-344; Dennis (*La Rose d'Amour; or The Adventures of a Gentleman in Search of Pleasure. Translated from the French of Rosseau. By Lola Montez, Countess of Landsfelt)*

116
Royal Amours; *or, Private Lovers of a King*

CLT 200*

117
Scenes in a Nunnery.

CLT 200*; Dennis

118
Scenes in the Seraglio.

CLT 136-137

119
Secret Passions

CLT 237*

120
The Secret Services and Duties of Major Lovitt

CLT 200*; Dennis (surname in title spelled Lovett)

121
Sharps and Flats; *or, The Perils of City Life*

CLT 236*; Wright I, 194; Hawley copyright

122
Simon the Radical; *or, The Adventures of a Bonnet Rouge*

Held by AAS

CLT 236*

123
Six Months in a Convent

Held by AAS and by author

CLT xxxiii note

124
Sports with Venus; *or, The Way to Do It*

CLT 200*

125
Tales of Twilight. *&c.*

CLT 229fn

126
La Tour De Nesle; *or The Amours of Marguerite [sic] of Burgundy*

CLT 220

127
The Two Lovers; *or, Fred in a Fix*

CLT 235*

128
Venus' Album; *or, Rosebuds of Love.*

CLT xxxiv, 235*

129
Venus in Boston: *A Romance of City Life.*

Held by Boston Public Library

CLT 201-202; Wright I, 2585; Hawley, table 2

130
The Wedding Night; *or, Advice to Bridegrooms*

CLT 237*

Notes on abbreviations:

AAS = American Antiquarian Society

BECPL = Buffalo and Erie County Public Library

CLA = *Catena Librorum Absconditorum*

CLT = *Catena Libroum Tacendorum*

Dennis = Dennis, "New York, Obscenity Regulation, and the Creation of American Erotica, 1820-1880"

Hawley copyright = George Thompson copyright *(Appendix C)*

Hawley PA = Hawley, unpublished database of 19th-c. publisher advertisements

ILP = *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*

LOC = Library of Congress

NYPL = New York Public Library

P = noted on a publisher's prospectus but not found in published form

UVA = University of Virginia

Appendix C. Copyright Holders of Works Written by George Thompson in the Courts of the District of Massachusetts and the Southern District of New York, 1840-1870

Holder	Title	Filing	Deposit	Author	Rights	Cite
William Berry	***City Crimes;*** *or Life in New York and Boston. A Volume for Everybody; Being A Mirror of Fashion; a Picture of Poverty, and a Startling Revelation of the Secret Crimes of Great Cities*. [part 1]	March 5, 1849	March 6, 1849	Greenhorn, author of *Dissipation, Radcliff, House Breaker,* etc.	Proprietor	12, 66, 70*
William Berry	***City Crimes;*** *or Life in New York and Boston. A Volume for Everybody; Being A Mirror of Fashion; a Picture of Poverty, and a Startling Revelation of the Secret Crimes of Great Cities*. [part 2]	March 6, 1849	March 6, 1849	Greenhorn, author of *Dissipation, Radcliff, House Breaker,* etc.	Proprietor	12, 66, 72*
William Berry	***Life of The Countess;*** *or Memoirs of a Woman of Leisure: being A Series of intrigues with the bloods, and a faithful delineation of the Private Frailties of our first men. Respectfully Dedicated to the Lawyers, Merchants and Divines of the day.*	April 3, 1849	not listed	By the Author	Proprietor	12, 66, 103*
Berry & Wright	***Venus in Boston:*** *A Romance of City Life.*	October 11, 1849	October 19, 1849	Greenhorn, author of *Dissipation, Radcliff, House Breaker,* etc.	Proprietors	12, 66, 319
Berry & Wright	***Adventures of A Pickpocket;*** *Or, Life at a Fashionable Watering Place.*	October 18, 1849	March 16, 1850	By Himself	Proprietors	12, 66, 327*
Berry & Wright	***The Evil Genius;*** *- or - The Spy of the Police. A Thrilling Record of City Vices*.	October 18, 1849	March 16, 1850	Paul de Kock	Proprietors	12, 66, 328*
William Berry	***City Crimes;*** *or, Life in New York and Boston. A Volume for Everybody; Being A Mirror of Fashion; A Picture of Poverty, and a Startling Revelation of the Secret Crimes of Great Cities*. [part 4]	October 18, 1849	October 18, 1849	Greenhorn, author of *Dissipation, Radcliff, House Breaker,* etc.	Proprietor	12, 66, 326*
William Berry	***City Crimes;*** *or, Life in New York and Boston. A volume for Everybody; Being A Mirror of Fashion; A Picture of Poverty, and a Startling Revelation of the Secret Crimes of Great Cities.* [part 3]	October 19, 1849	October 19, 1849	Greenhorn, author of *Dissipation, Radcliff, House Breaker,* etc.	Proprietor	12, 66, 333*
Berry & Wright	***Julia King;*** *or The Follies of My Life.*	April 4, 1850	April 4, 1850	By the author	Proprietors	13, 67, 156
William Berry	***Sharps and Flats;*** *or The Perils of City Life. Being the Adventures of One Who lives by his wits.*	May 20, 1850	May 20, 1850	Asmodeus	Proprietor	13, 67, 241

Holder	Title	Filing	Deposit	Author	Rights	Cite
William Berry	***Jack Harold,*** *Or, The Criminal's Career; A story with a moral. Tracing a Life of Villainy from the Cradle to the Gallows: and showing The awful effects of Crime, The Consequences of Vice, the Power of Beauty, the Seductive influences of Voluptuousness, the Blighting results of passion, and the Mysteries of City Life.*	May 22, 1850	November 21, 1850	Greenhorn, author of *the Housebreaker, Dissipation, City Crimes, Venus in Boston, the Gay Deceiver,* etc.	Proprietor	13, 67, 243*
Willis Little & Company	***Life and Exploits of "Bristol Bill,"*** *The Notorious Burglar; Being Compiled From his own Confessions and the Records of Crime In England and America.*	August 22, 1850	not listed	not listed	Proprietors	13, 67, 361*
George W. Hill	***Adolene Wellmont;*** *or, The Female Adventurer. Being the Confessions of a Girl of Spirit, and a True and Thrilling Picture of the Mysteries of City Life.* Written by Herself.	May 26, 1853	July 22, 1853	Herself [Adolene Wellmont]	Proprietor	37, 165, 397
George W. Hill	***Kate Castleton:*** *or, The Beautiful Milliner. Showing the Fortunes and Misfortunes of a Young Girl in Humble Life, who became both a Wife and Widow in One Day.* Kate Castleton, from a Daguerreotype. By George Thompson, Author of *Jack Harold, Demon of Gold, Dashington, Lady's Garter*, etc.	July 22, 1853	not listed	George Thompson	Proprietor	37, 166, 168
George W. Hill	***Catharine and Clara, or, The Double Suicide:*** *A True Tale of Disappointed Love. This thrilling narrative is founded upon the recent suicide of Catharine B. Cotton and Clara C. Cochran, at Manchester N.H.*	August 30, 1853	not listed	not listed	Proprietor	37, 166, 319
George W. Hill	***The Brazen Star, or, The Adventures of a New York M.P.*** *A True Tale of the Times we live in.* By George Thompson, author of *Kate Castleton, Gay Girls of New York, Jack Harold, Lady's Garter,* etc etc etc	November 21, 1853	not listed	George Thompson	Proprietor	38, 167, 273

Holder	Title	Filing	Deposit	Author	Rights	Cite
George W. Hill	***The Gay Girls of New York:*** *or, Life on Broadway; being a Mirror of the Fashions, Follies, and Crimes of a Great City.* By George Thompson, "Greenhorn," author of *Kate Castleton, Brazen Star*, and a Host of other Popular Tales.	November 21, 1853	February 6, 1854	George Thompson, "Greenhorn"	Proprietor	38, 167, 274
George Thompson	***Käthchen Castleton.*** *Die Schőne Puchmacherin oder die Schicksale eines jungen Mädchëns im miederen? Lebens tande die an enem Lage zugleich Frau und Mittwe wurde.* Käthchen Castleton von einem Daguerreotype. Von Georg Thompson.	February 28, 1854	March 15, 1854	Georg Thompson [sic]	Author and Proprietor	38, 168, 195
P.F. Harris	***The Autobiography of Petite Bunkum, The Showman;*** *showing his Birth, Education, and Bringing up; his Astonishing Adventures by Sea and Land; his connection with Tom Thumb, Judy Heath, the Woolly Horse, the Fudge Mermaid, and the Swedish Nightingale; together with many other Strange and Startling matters in his Eventful Career; all of which are Illustrated with numerous Engravings.* Written by himself.	November 17, 1854	December 6, 1854	Petite Bunkum, Himself.	Proprietor	38, 170, 468
P.H. Harris	***The Bridal Chamber, and its Mysteries***: *or, Life at our Fashionable Hotels.* By George Thompson, Esq. Author of *Jack Harold, His Own Autobiography, Dashington, Lady's Garter, The Actress*, and One Hundred other Popular Tales.	February 3, 1855	February 3, 1855	George Thompson	Proprietor	39, 171, 282
P.F. Harris	***The Magic Night Cap***. *A Story for Husbands and Wives.*	February 3, 1855	not listed	not listed	not listed	39, 171, 280
P.F. Harris	***The Locket.***	February 3, 1855	September 13, 1855	not listed	Proprietor	39, 171, 281
P.F. Harris	***Tom De Lacy:*** *or, The Convict's Revenge*. By George Thompson Esq. Author of *Jack Harold, Dashington, Lady's Garter, The Actress? The Locket*, and One Hundred other Popular Tales	June 12, 1855	not listed	George Thompson Esq	Proprietor	39, 172, 280

Holder	Title	Filing	Deposit	Author	Rights	Cite
P.F. Harris	***Ten Days in the Tombs:*** *or, A Key to the Modern Bastile; [sic] Being a True and Authentic Description of the heretofore unknown Mysteries that exist within the Walls of the Egyptian Edifice in Centre Street - and a Startling Picture of Life in the Stone Jug!* By George Thompson Esq. Author of One Hundred Popular Romances.	September 12, 1855	not listed	George Thompson Esq.	Proprietor	39, 173, 118
F. Brady	***Grace Willard;*** *or, The High and the Low. A Picture of Real Life, Forming a Startling Contrast between the Wealth and Poverty of New York.*	September 17, 1857	September 24, 1857	not listed	Proprietor	41, 179, 360
P.F. Harris	***The Beautiful Unknown:*** *or The Mysterious Fair One of the Lonely Cottage.* By G.T.	June 3, 1859	not listed	G.T.	Proprietor	42, 184, 293
P.J. Harris [sic]	***That "Horrid Little Fright."*** *Being the History of Prescollina, An Orphan Girl.* By G.T.	June 15, 1859	not listed	G.T.	Proprietor	42, 184, 353

Possibly by Thompson:

George Ackerman	***The Maid of Seville.*** *A Romance of the Spanish Inquisition. By the Author of The Days of Henri Quake* etc. [portion illegible]	October 3, 1854	not listed	The author of *Henry Quake* [illegible]	Proprietor	38, 170, 314
Frederic A. Brady	***Rule or Ruin:*** *A Satire on the Times. –*	October 22, 1860	not listed	not listed	Proprietor	44, 190, 409

Note: Cite refers to reel, section, and page number of the microfilmed Library of Congress Copyright Office Records. An asterisk indicates that a title page has been located in the Library of Congress Copyright Deposit Title Page Collection. Not all title pages deposited were eventually transferred from district courts to the Library of Congress upon consolidation of copyright records in 1870; at the same time, not all the titles deposited were published. Therefore, the records must be evaluated as a record of the intention to publish.

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